

THE JESSE JAMES STORIES

A WEEKLY DEALING WITH THE DETECTION OF CRIME

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 22.

Price, Five Cents.



THE HUNTED BANDITS RAISED THEIR PISTOLS AND FIRED

BOOTHOUNDS CLOSED IN ON THEM.—(CHAPTER VIII.)

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Jesse James' Exploits.

By W. B. LAWSON.

CHAPTER VIII.

A RACE FOR LIFE.

One day in the autumn of 1879, two men, mounted on magnificent thoroughbred horses, rode rapidly along the broad turnpike which follows the east bank of the Tennessee River, a distance of more than fifty miles, terminating at the town of Florence, Alabama, just south of the Tennessee State line.

The two horsemen paid little heed to the beautiful scenery, but occasionally glanced anxiously behind them, as though they feared pursuit. They had been riding hard all day, and their horses were beginning to show signs of fatigue. What was worse, both animals were without shoes, and they were growing lame from the long run over the hard turnpike.

The horsemen were anxious to reach a blacksmith's shop before nightfall, so their horses could be shod. A small cabin with a shed outside, standing a short distance off the main road, attracted their attention, and, turning their horses aside, they rode up to the shed, and were delighted to find it a blacksmith's shop, with the smith at work inside.

"Here's a job for you, smithy, and you want to be quick about it, too," said the taller of the two horsemen, as both dismounted.

The blacksmith, a tall, muscular man of fifty years, put down his hammer and tongs and, stepping outside the little shed he used for a shop, looked his customers and their horses over very carefully and critically.

"Them be fine critters you gents are ridin', pure old Tennessee stock, ain't they?" said the blacksmith in the slow, drawling tones peculiar to the natives of that locality.

"None of your business. We want our horses shod at once, and we have the money to pay for it. Now, you want to get to work, Mr. Blacksmith, and don't stand there asking questions."

"Well, now, you 'uns needn't get riled. I allus admire a fine critter when I see one, and I thought I'd seen this pair afore."

"Get your tools, old man, and put shoes on these horses, and you want to be mighty quick about it, too!"

This order was backed up by a long, gleaming revolver in the hands of the taller of the two strangers, who acted as spokesman.

The old blacksmith did not seem a bit frightened at sight of the big six-shooter. He only laughed,

and, as he turned to his bellows, he said, in the same slow, drawling tone:

"That's all right, Jesse, my boy, put up your gun, and I'll have your horses shod in next to no time."

The big revolver was half-way back into its scabbard when the old man spoke the name of Jesse. In an instant it was again leveled at the old blacksmith's breast, and the one addressed as Jesse asked sternly:

"How did you know that was my name?"

Again, the old man laughed, and he gave his bellows handle a long pull before he answered:

"Is it possible you boys have entirely forgotten old Billy Haynes, Quantrell's color sergeant? Many a hard fight and a long night ride we've had together, eh, Jesse and Frank?"

The man addressed as Jesse put up his revolver, while the other stepped forward and, extending his hand, exclaimed:

"Darned if it ain't old Sergeant Billy! Shade of Quantrell! what are you doing down here?"

The three men shook hands now, for the recognition was mutual. The two strangers were the famous bandits, Frank and Jesse James, and in the old blacksmith they had recognized a former comrade, Sergeant Billy Haynes, of Quantrell's guerillas. The three men had ridden side by side many times, when bullets were flying thick and fast around them. After one of Quantrell's last fights, Sergeant Haynes was among the missing, and his comrades thought he had been killed. To his old friends he explained that he had been taken prisoner in the fight, where he was supposed to have been killed, and did not escape until a few days before the war ended. Then he drifted back to his old home in Tennessee, married and settled down to live a life of peace and industry. He frankly informed his former comrades that he was quite familiar with their records since the war, as published by the newspapers, which made Jesse rather suspicious.

"We are only down in this part of the country for a little rest, and we are not looking for trouble, but if it is forced on us we will be ready to meet it any time," he explained to Haynes.

Again the old blacksmith laughed in his quiet way.

"Don't be uneasy about me, boys, old Billy Haynes ain't never yet gone back on a friend, and he's gettin' most too old to begin now. I prefer to work for a livin', an' live a life of peace, but if you boys

like a little excitement best, it's none of my business. If you stay about these parts long, an' I can do you a good turn, you may count on old Billy every time. I'll not forget the old days when we fought together."

Jesse and Frank again shook the old blacksmith's hand, and they knew they could trust him not to betray them, and the time came when the old man made good his promise.

While this conversation was going on the old blacksmith had been hard at work, and very soon he had both horses skillfully shod.

"Goin' to speckerlate a little in stock while you are takin' a rest down in Tennessee?"

"Well, we borrowed a couple of horses from an old farmer up the road last night. Our animals were worked down, and we left them in his pasture to rest while we tested the speed and staying qualities of his. He may agree to the swap when he finds out who we are."

"Well you made a mi'ty good selection. I know these here critters, an' they can outrun anything in Tennessee."

"That's the kind of stock we want."

The fact was, the two outlaws had ridden their own horses almost to death in a recent daring and narrow escape from the officers in Missouri, and they had purposely turned their course into Tennessee in order to supply themselves with fresh and fast horses.

When their horses were shod the old blacksmith invited the two outlaws to spend the night at his cabin, but they declined. The fact was, they anticipated pursuit, and they did not wish to get their old comrade into trouble on their account. They thanked him kindly for his offer, and, promising to see him again before they left that part of the country, they rode away.

As Jesse mounted his horse, he drew a handful of gold from his pocket, and threw it on the ground at the feet of the old blacksmith. Sergeant Billy called to them to come back and take their gold, but a merry laugh was the only answer from the outlaws, as they galloped away to the south, and in a few moments they were out of sight.

An hour later the two outlaws stopped at a farmhouse for supper, and to feed and rest their horses. In a strange country, with the possibility of a large posse being in pursuit of them, they dared not sleep under a roof, so late that night they camped near the bank of the river, and slept soundly until morning.

The following day was Sunday, and as the outlaws were then a long distance from the place where they stole the horses they were riding, they felt little fear of pursuit.

After getting a good breakfast at a farmhouse, and securing all the information possible from the farmer about the roads and the surrounding country, they continued their journey to the south, but rode very slowly.

Early in the day they were joined by a rider who was none other than Dick Liddell, an old companion of Jesse James.

It was nearly noon when the three outlaws approached a country church, where a large congregation of colored people were assembled for worship. Just before they reached the church they saw a party of horsemen ride up from the opposite direction, and, forming a line around the house of worship, begin to shoot through the doors and windows.

The shots were followed by screams of terror from the helpless negroes on the inside. They dared not attempt escape, because they might be shot down as they ran from the house. The screams of terror caused the white men on the outside to shout with laughter and pour another volley of shots through the windows.

The James boys had often heard of the Southern Ku Klux, and how they murdered negroes in cold blood, and, as they watched this affair from a short distance, they decided the men doing the shooting were the raiders so much dreaded by the colored people.

They were not real Ku Klux, for they are always disguised, and work at night. They were nothing worse than a crowd of desperate and reckless young men living in the neighborhood, whose favorite amusement was to break up the services at the colored churches. They did not shoot to kill, but several times their reckless shots had taken effect.

"I'm going to take a hand in this affair myself. I need a little pistol practice, and I'm not going to see those poor people shot down like dogs without a chance to defend themselves," said Jesse, after watching the performance for a few minutes in silence.

"Lead on, I'm with you. We'll teach those cowards a lesson they won't forget for many a day," answered Frank, and Dick Liddell echoed the sentiment.

The three men uttered a yell, and, spurring their horses forward, they rode straight into the midst of

the gang of young desperadoes, firing right and left. Three of the gang fell from their saddles, and the others were so badly frightened they turned and fled as fast as their horses could run.

The young Southerners were not only taken completely by surprise, they were dumfounded at the sight of white men taking the part of negroes. Such a thing had never been heard of in that section.

Reining up their horses, Jesse and Frank James turned about and started in pursuit of the flying young desperadoes, and sent half-a-dozen shots after them, but purposely fired high, as they did not care to kill or wound any more of them unless it was necessary. The young men were too much surprised and frightened to return the fire, and the outlaws did not follow them far.

They turned and rode back to the church. In the meantime, the two or three hundred negroes assembled there had caught on to the situation, and they were almost as much surprised as the young ruffians had been that white men should dare come to their rescue. They crowded about their rescuers, and the gray-haired old minister, bowing down on his knees at the feet of their horses, prayed for blessings and protection on the heads of the men who had come to save them.

The three outlaws remained some time at the church, until the regular services had been resumed, and they enjoyed the singing and shouting immensely. Finally one of the old men in the congregation came to them and warned them that the crowd of ruffians they had driven away would probably return with reinforcements soon.

The daring bandits did not fear a hundred such cowards, but for certain reasons they did not wish their presence in that locality known, and they decided it would be best to keep out of the way, if possible, so they resumed their journey to the south.

The crowd of young ruffians who had fired into the negro church belonged to the leading families in that section, and news of the attack on them by three strangers seemed to fly on the wind. Three of their number had been shot down, badly wounded, and they must be avenged. The strangers must be followed, and when they were overtaken they would be shot down like dogs. No white man who dared defend a negro could live in that section.

In less than two hours after the James boys had driven the cowardly young ruffians away from the

church they had gathered a band of fifty of their friends and companions, and started in pursuit of the strangers. They were all well armed, and in the party were a number of men almost as reckless of danger as the men they were following.

Frank and Jesse James and Dick Liddell had fought side by side with men from West Tennessee under Quantrell, and no one knew better than they the courage of the older men of this locality. The boys, like those they drove away from the church, they did not fear, but they knew if they met the fathers and older brothers of those same boys, it meant a fight to the death.

The daring bandits admired men who would stand up and fight, but at this time they were not looking for a fight. They had come to this section where they were unknown, to seek some much-needed rest, and to gather about them some of the members of their scattered band. A fight that might disclose their identity they determined to avoid, if possible, even if they had to run from it, and they had never been known to run away from a fight before.

The three horsemen had gone less than five miles from the negro church, when they heard the sound of pursuit. Shouts and yells mingled with the hoof-beats of running horses came to their ears. Suddenly Dick Liddell asked:

"Did you hear that?"

"What?"

"There it is again. Don't you hear it?"

"I hear nothing but a dog howling," said Jesse.

"That is the bay of a bloodhound. I have heard it before since I have been a resident of the South. Listen! There is another and another. There seems to be a pack of them, and they are on our trail."

Jesse and Frank listened again, and this time they could hear the dogs plainly. Their deep-mouthed baying was coming nearer and nearer every moment.

This was a new experience for the great bandits. Hundreds of times they had been trailed by human bloodhounds, but never before had they heard the bay of dogs on their trail.

As they rode along, they could hear the baying of the dogs every few moments, and the dread sounds seemed to be getting nearer. The bloodhounds were gaining on them.

To be chased by bloodhounds was a new experience for the daring Western bandits. They had read thrilling pieces of fiction telling how criminals in the

South were caught and torn to shreds by the blood-thirsty brutes, as slaves had been before the war, but they little thought they would ever hear the cry of these manhunters on their own trail.

The baying of the dogs made Jesse James' blood boil. It was the first time in his life he had been hunted like a wild beast by dogs trained for human chase. He swore a terrible oath to make the fight of his life then and there in an attempt not only to exterminate the pack of dogs, but the men who had set them on his trail.

Frank and Dick Liddell did not enjoy this new experience, and they were almost as anxious as Jesse for a shot at the dogs first, and then one at their masters.

The three bandits wheeled their horses around, and waited for the dogs to come up. They had not long to wait.

Louder and clearer sounded the baying of the dogs every moment. They were free from their leashes, and the trail was growing warm.

The horses of the bandits heard the cry of the dogs, and trembled with fear or excitement. They moved about uneasily, and kept their wild, distended eyes on the woods, whence came the dread sounds.

On came the dogs, their heads close to the ground, their jaws dripping foam after the long chase.

At every leap they gave forth that peculiar half howl sounding so much like a human cry, that it would strike terror to the hearts of men less courageous than those they were now pursuing.

The three horses showed a disposition to run away, but their bridles were held by firm hands.

In their right hands each of the three bandits held a big revolver.

They had not long to wait. In a few moments the bushes parted fifty yards away, and a long-bodied, gaunt-looking dog, with red eyes and open mouth, leaped through. Another followed, then another and another, until six appeared. The brutes raised their heads for a moment and caught sight of the game they were pursuing. Then they gave forth a dozen short, sharp barks, which informed the men behind that the game was at bay.

The dogs were well trained for their work. They did not rush forward in a bunch, but scattered until they formed a half circle. Then they started to close in on the hunted bandits, all the time giving vent to those short, shrill barks.

It was an awe-inspiring sight, and one that would strike terror to the heart of an ordinary criminal.

The dogs were only fifty feet away, when the three bandits raised their pistols and fired.

As the three sharp reports rang out, three of the dogs leaped into the air and, with a howl of pain, fell back dead.

Again the three revolvers spoke, and then the entire pack of fierce, man-hunting bloodhounds, the terror of all the petty criminals in that section, lay dead on the ground.

Those behind heard the shots and the death howls of their dogs. Then, with terrible oaths, they urged their men forward. Every dog in the pack was worth at least two hundred dollars, and their death was a serious loss.

The smoke of the last shots at the dogs had not cleared away when a score of armed horsemen rode out of the woods.

At sight of the three bandits, surrounded by the dead dogs, the party opened fire. They did not pause for an instant, but dashed forward, firing as they advanced.

The bandits heard the whistle of bullets all around their heads, but they held their fire until they were within fifty yards of them. Then they fired together, three shots each in rapid succession.

Their aim had been true. Four men in the party reeled and fell from their saddles, and the others pulled up their horses.

The leader gave a few hurried commands, and the group divided to form a circle and surround the three bandits.

It was time to move. The three men wheeled their horses around, and, after another shot at the posse, they started away at full gallop.

They were riding straight down the broad turnpike, which at this point ran close to the river.

Without slackening his pace in the least, Jesse called to Frank and Dick:

"Wheel your horses to the right sharp. We'll make for the river and get under a bank there and fight it out, if we can't give them the dodge."

Just then they came to a clearing leading down to a bank of the river, only a few hundred yards away, and scarcely checking the speed of their horses, they turned them sharply to the right and headed straight for the river. Glancing back, they saw their pursuers pulling in their horses, and heard them shouting

something that sounded like a warning of the bank ahead.

As another volley of bullets whistled about their heads, the bold bandits glanced in front of them and saw they were riding straight to the edge of a bluff that seemed to be at least fifty feet high. They were only two hundred feet from the brink, and, at the terrible pace the horses were going, it was impossible to turn them aside or to check them up in time.

Quick as a flash, the three men turned in their saddles, and fired a shot straight at their pursuers, who had reined in their horses, then, tightening rein, Frank and Jesse and Dick set their feet firmly in the stirrups and turned their faces to the high bluff toward which they were riding at a terrible pace.

CHAPTER IX.

AT THE MERCY OF OUTLAWS.

"Help, help!"

It was a woman's voice, but the night winds that took up and carried away the piteous cry for help brought back no answering shout from brave rescuers.

"Help, help!"

Again the cry was heard, but this time very faint. A few moments later the sound of hoofbeats was heard, as a dozen horsemen galloped rapidly away, and then all was still.

A beautiful young woman had been abducted from her father's house at midnight, taken from her own room, while her father, who slept just across the hall, had not been awakened by her cries for help. It was a bold and successful robbery.

West Tennessee was for years infested by a band of the most daring and successful moonshiners who ever defied Uncle Sam and his revenue laws. Men who stood high in social and political circles were at the head of the business and the profits were enormous. The leaders in the unlawful business were not even suspected by their neighbors, so well had they kept their secret. The men who ran the stills and disposed of the goods were hired for the purpose. They were selected chiefly for their cunning and daring, and were well paid for the dangerous work. For a long time the moonshiners were scarcely molested, and they became exceedingly bold. No revenue officer dared venture among their retreat in the hills and mountains, and the stills were kept running night and day.

But a change came at last. Colonel Nelson Teale was appointed United States marshal for the Western Tennessee district. Colonel Teale's reputation for courage extended far and wide. He was a man who did not know the meaning of the word fear, and the moonshiners knew he was a man who would do his duty or die in the attempt.

Soon after Colonel Teale took charge of the office he received an anonymous letter, which warned him that if he attempted to break up the business of the moonshiners who operated in his district, his life would be in danger. He paid no attention to the letter, and in a few days it was followed by another, which stated that some of his best friends were interested in the business, and for personal and political reasons he had best let them alone.

This last letter roused Colonel Teale to instant action. He declared that if any man he called friend was concerned in this illegal business, he was going to find it out as soon as possible.

He made no secret of his intention to invade the stronghold of the moonshiners, destroy their stills and arrest every man he found engaged in the business.

The moonshiners knew it would be a fight to the death when they met Colonel Teale and his men, and they prepared for it. A few days later, Colonel Teale, at the head of a posse of deputy marshals, made a raid on the moonshiners. They captured two stills, and destroyed them without trouble, but when they started to advance farther into the mountains, they were fired on from ambush. A bloody battle followed. The officers were outnumbered five to one, and every man in the party was hit except Colonel Teale. Three deputies were killed and four wounded. None of the moonshiners was killed.

Colonel Teale had led the fight and was more exposed than any of his men, yet he escaped without a scratch, while they all fell. He was satisfied that this happened by design, and not by accident, but he had no idea why the moonshiners should wish to spare his life.

With his men all killed or wounded, Colonel Teale could only retreat, but he was now determined that this band should be broken up, and his brave men avenged. He would return with a posse large enough to drive them out of the mountains, and every man of them should be captured or killed.

Colonel Teale's only daughter Nellie was the belle

of West Tennessee. She had suitors by the score, but none more persistent and determined to win her heart and hand than Major Douglass Gordon. Major Gordon was a local politician of considerable influence, and a man of wealth. He was reputed to be a gambler, and he was known to be a bully, and a man who would fight on the slightest provocation. He was always armed, and few men cared to provoke a quarrel with him. His habits were generally bad, and only his wealth and political influence gave him any social standing.

Nellie Teale had no respect for Major Gordon, but she was civil to him on her father's account. Gordon had been a candidate for the office held by Colonel Teale. As soon as the latter announced himself a candidate, Gordon withdrew in his favor and worked hard to secure his appointment. Colonel Teale naturally felt kindly toward him for this. He little suspected Gordon's real motive.

Soon after Colonel Teale received his commission, Gordon asked his consent to pay his addresses to the colonel's daughter, Nellie. Then the motive of the little political trick was apparent. Colonel Teale knew something of Gordon's character and habits, and he hesitated. He did not like to refuse him outright, but he was sure Nellie could never love such a man, and, to gain time, he asked the major to wait a few days for his answer.

The day following the disastrous raid on the moonshiners, Colonel Teale received a visit from Major Gordon. Gordon approached the subject very cautiously, but finally he explained that he had been employed by the moonshiners to see if a truce could not be agreed upon. He was authorized, he said, to offer Colonel Teale the sum of five hundred dollars per month, to allow the illegal business to go on without molestation.

Colonel Teale was furious.

"Sir, your proposition is infamous! I half suspect that you have an interest in this illicit whisky business."

Major Gordon sprang to his feet and drew a pistol. He was not quick enough. Before his finger could find the trigger, Colonel Teale had the drop on him.

The major put up his pistol, but his face was livid with rage.

"Colonel Teale, you shall suffer for those words," he hissed through his clinched teeth.

Colonel Teale answered very quietly, still holding his pistol in his hand:

"Sir, your actions confirm my suspicions. Some time ago you spoke to me about my daughter. I now give you my answer. I forbid you to ever speak to her again, and let this be the last time you ever set foot in my house. That we may understand each other fully, I repeat that I believe you are interested in the illicit whisky business, and that you draw a large amount of your income from that source. I warn you that I shall break up your business, and, if such a thing is possible, I shall find evidence to prove your connection with it and to convict you in court."

"And that we may understand each other even better," said Gordon, who was now quite cool, "I will tell you, Colonel Teale, that your daughter Nellie shall be my wife, and that you shall give your consent. You will not break up the moonshiners, and you will not prove my connection with them. Now we understand each other, and I will bid you good-morning."

With a polite bow, Gordon turned and left the room.

Colonel Teale smiled at Gordon's threats, but at the same time he fully realized that he had a bold and cunning enemy to deal with, and there was no time to be lost.

CHAPTER X.

THE ABDUCTION.

In three days Colonel Teale had secured a posse of fifty resolute men. He had appointed as his chief deputy a young man of undoubted courage, Tom Hewitt. Young Hewitt was the son of a poor farmer, but he was very popular in the neighborhood. The young man did not seek the position in the revenue service on account of any particular love of fighting or adventure. While he was as brave as any man living, he never sought a difficulty with any one. His reason for seeking a position under Colonel Teale was that he loved the colonel's pretty daughter, Nellie. No one knew better than Tom Hewitt the dangers to which Colonel Teale would be exposed, when he undertook to break up the desperate moonshiners, and he feared that in some way harm might come to the girl he loved.

Tom Hewitt had never dared to speak to Nellie Teale of his love, the social gulf between them was

too broad, but there was just enough of romance in his nature to make him hope that in his position as chief deputy he might at some time be able to render her or her father a service which would at least win a smile of thanks from her.

All preparations for the second raid on the moonshiners had been made. It was twenty miles from Colonel Teale's residence to the hills where the stills were located. It was arranged that the posse would start at sundown, and reach the scene of operations by midnight, when they expected to find everything in full blast, and all the men engaged in the work on the ground.

Soon after leaving the house of Colonel Teale, Douglass Gordon mounted his horse and rode away to the hills by a path known only to the moonshiners and their friends.

Colonel Teale's suspicions were well founded. Douglass Gordon, the politician, was the backer of the moonshiners. He was the man who furnished the money to buy all the material needed, and he received the lion's share of the profits. Few people suspected his connection with the business, and many of the men who worked for him had never seen him, and did not know his name. They knew there was a man on the outside, known as the boss, but they did not even suspect he was so important a person as Major Gordon, the well-known and influential politician.

Gordon's trusted agent in the management of the stills was a man named Sam Cobb, a big, brutal ruffian known among the men under him as Big Foot Sam. He had been a moonshiner on his own account in North Carolina, but was compelled to leave that State after he had killed two revenue officers and wounded several others. He was a desperate fellow, ready to do anything for money, and had plenty of cunning and courage.

It was for a conference with Sam Cobb that Gordon went to the hills. He had a job for his man, which could be trusted to no one else. A fight with the revenue officers could be left to Cobb and his men without instructions, but Gordon had something of more importance on hand this time. The desperate villain knew that Colonel Teale loved his daughter better than he did his own life. And he was going to play this card to win. He would get possession of the girl, and the price of her ransom would be an agreement that the moonshiners should not be dis-

turbed, and her father's consent, as well as her own; that she should become the wife of Douglass Gordon. If both should refuse? Gordon smiled at the thought. Once the girl was in his power, her wishes would be of little avail.

Gordon met his lieutenant at the cave in the hills that was the headquarters of the gang, and laid his plans before him. Nellie Teale was to be abducted from her father's house, and taken to some safe hiding-place in the mountains, where she was to be well cared for until such time as Gordon found an opportunity of visiting her without being followed. Not even the men who were to assist the chief of the moonshiners in the work of abduction were to know that it was done by Gordon's orders. Spies were to be put out, and it was arranged that the abduction of the girl should be attempted on the night before Colonel Teale expected to start on his second raid. This would cause a change of his plans, and leave the moonshiners undisturbed for a while.

When all the details of the plan had been arranged, Gordon rode home with a smile of triumph on his face. He knew he could trust his man Cobb to carry out his orders to the letter, so his only concern now was to be seen at certain places for the next few days in order to be able to prove an alibi in the event of his being suspected by Colonel Teale.

The night before he was to start on his second raid on the moonshiners, Colonel Teale retired early in order to secure plenty of sleep and rest. His men were to meet him at his house the next evening, and they would set out on the perilous journey at sunset.

Colonel Teale slept soundly that night.

At midnight six horsemen rode slowly and cautiously toward the residence of Colonel Teale. They were moonshiners, led by Sam Cobb.

A short distance from the house the men dismounted in the shadow of some trees. One man was left in charge of the horses, and the others crept cautiously toward the rear of the house. They had been told the location of the young lady's room, and in a few minutes they stood beneath her window. Her room was on the first floor. To raise the sash and effect an entrance was the work of a few moments only. The men were provided with a gag and a bottle of chloroform. The girl must make no outcry, if it could be prevented.

As she was rudely lifted from her bed, Nellie awoke, and twice she cried aloud for help, but her

cries were unheeded. In a moment she was gagged, and chloroform held to her mouth and nose until she was unconscious. Then she was dropped out of the window into the arms of two men outside, who hurried away to the horses. The men in the room gathered up some of the girl's clothing, and, leaping to the ground, followed those carrying the now unconscious girl.

In a few moments the moonshiners had mounted their horses, Cobb taking the girl up in front of him and then rode rapidly away toward the den in the hills.

Colonel Teale was astir early the next morning, and when his daughter failed to appear at her usual time for rising, he felt a strange sense of dread, and went at once to her room. His knock received no response, and now very much alarmed, he broke in the door. A single glance confirmed his worst fears, his daughter was gone.

Douglass Gordon's threat came back to Colonel Teale now with a new meaning, but it at once gave him a clue to his daughter's mysterious abduction. He would look for her in the hiding-place of the moonshiners, and when he found her, woe to the man who was responsible for this outrage.

Colonel Teale sent for his deputies at once, and told them of his daughter's abduction, and his belief that it was the work of the moonshiners. He did not mention to them of his belief that Douglass Gordon was the man who planned it.

Tom Hewitt's heart beat like a trip-hammer when he heard of the abduction of the girl he loved, but mingled with his anxiety for her safety and anger at the cowardly outrage, there was a feeling that this would give him the opportunity he coveted of doing her a great service.

In vain young Hewitt urged Colonel Teale to remain behind and let him lead the search for Nellie. The colonel was unnerved by the suspense and excitement, but he would not remain behind.

A hurried search of the premises disclosed the footprints of the horses ridden by the moonshiners, and it was an easy matter to follow the trail.

In a few moments twenty determined men, led by Colonel Teale and Tom Hewitt, were galloping away on the trail.

So fresh was the trail the pursuers were hopeful of being able to overtake the party before they could reach their hiding-places in the hills.

They had gone less than two miles when Colonel Teale's belief that his daughter had been abducted by the moonshiners received a serious setback. They had arrived at a point where the roads forked. The road to the left led up into the hills where the moonshiners were located, the one to the right soon turned in an opposite direction. The trail they were following turned to the right.

What could it mean?

CHAPTER XI.

THE QUARREL.

With their horses headed for the brink of a high precipice, and running like mad, it seemed that Jesse and Frank James, and Dick, were doomed to a quick and terrible death.

They made no effort to check their horses. It looked as if they were courting certain destruction.

Again their pursuers shouted to them a warning, but it was unheeded.

The horses did not realize the danger until they were too near the brink to stop of their own accord.

With a snort of terror the flying animals seemed to rise in the air, and then they sank down out of sight.

The daring riders kept their seats as firmly as though their horses were only leaping hurdles in a race.

Many times before they had taken similar desperate chances of escape when hard pressed, but then they were in the West where they knew the height of every precipice, and rode horses trained to such leaps. This time it was literally a leap in the dark.

But again the fates favored the daring bandits.

The precipice, which from the ground above seemed so high, was in reality less than twenty feet above the water. The river at that point was quite deep, and the bottom smooth. The three horses landed in the water squarely on their feet, and when they rose to the surface horses and riders were unhurt.

At a glance the three desperadoes saw that the precipice from which they had leaped a moment before projected far out over the water. Back at the base of the cliff there was a narrow strip of sand above the water. Turning their horses around, they were soon out of the water, none the worse for the adventure, except a very thorough ducking.

For half an hour they remained perfectly quiet. They heard their pursuers come to the brink of the bluff above them, then turn and ride away.

Dick left them here, promising to join them again shortly. An hour later the three men swam their horses around the bluff to a point where they could get up the bank. They did not return to the main road, but finding a by-path they followed it until they reached the cabin of a countryman, who agreed to give them food and shelter for the night, for the gold they offered him, and ask no questions.

They first saw that their horses were well fed, and then they proceeded to dry their clothes. A good supper was soon prepared for them, and a little later they retired to the shed room of the cabin, where they enjoyed a night of undisturbed rest. They felt safe from further pursuit on account of the affair at the church, for the reason that the men who followed them to the bluff believed them to be at the bottom of the Tennessee River. Their real identity they were sure was known to no one in that section except old Billy Haynes, and they knew they could trust him.

For the first time in many months Jesse and Frank James experienced a feeling of absolute security from danger, and they decided to take a good long rest, provided the life did not become too dull.

After a bountiful breakfast the next morning they rode away to the south, and a few hours later arrived at the quiet little village of Marion. They were pleased with the looks of the little town, and decided to remain there for a while. The place boasted one small hotel and livery stable, both owned by the same man. The outlaws secured rooms at the hotel, and arranged for the board of their horses at the stable. Then, as it was several hours until dinner time, they entered the one saloon of the village, and, seating themselves at a table, ordered drinks. The saloon was well filled with villagers, and they were all discussing the abduction of Colonel Teale's daughter the night before.

The two bandits listened to the story of the abduction with interest, and soon decided that they were not in such a quiet and peaceful community as they had imagined.

This opinion was confirmed when they heard the crowd discuss the desperate character of the moonshiners, who were supposed to have carried off Nellie Teale.

Half an hour after the two bandits entered the saloon, two men, better dressed than the average villager, walked in. Instantly every man in the place

greeted one of the newcomers as major, and it was evident that he was a man of some importance in the village.

The man addressed as major shook hands all around, and introduced his friend as Mr. Swanson, a merchant from the government works down the river.

The James boys had been looking intently at the man called Swanson from the moment he entered the room. As soon as he spoke they seemed to recognize his voice, and exchanged significant glances, but said nothing.

Presently the stranger glanced toward the two men seated at the table. As his eyes met those of the men at the table, he placed his finger on his lips, and then continued his conversation with the major. His sign had been seen and understood by the men for whom it was intended, and no one else in the room had noticed it.

The handshaking and introductions finished, Major Gordon, for the man addressed as major was the well-known politician, invited all hands up to the bar to drink at his expense.

Every one present promptly stepped up to the bar except the two strangers seated at a table.

"Come up, gentlemen, come right up, this is my treat," said the major, turning to the strangers.

To his surprise they declined. Major Gordon was well under the influence of liquor and disposed to be quarrelsome. He walked over to the table where the two men were quietly sipping their own drinks, and said, in a loud voice:

"Did you hear me? I asked you to come and take a drink with me."

"And we declined your invitation," answered Jesse, very quietly.

"Do you mean you won't drink with me?"

"Certainly!"

"Do you know who I am?"

"No, and I don't care to know."

The man addressed as Swanson came over and attempted to pacify Major Gordon, but his temper was up now, and he would not listen.

Again Swanson and the men at the table exchanged glances, and the former stepped back, but stood immediately behind Gordon.

"Sir, I am Major Gordon," and the major brought his fist down on the table with considerable force.

"Well, you are no gentleman."

If a bomb had exploded in the room, it would

scarcely have created more excitement than did these words quietly spoken by Jesse James.

Major Gordon turned pale with anger, and his hand went to his hip pocket. Before he could draw a weapon he found himself looking down the barrel of Jesse's long six-shooter, while Frank, with a pistol in each hand, had the drop on the crowd.

It was an exciting moment. For ten seconds no one spoke, but Major Gordon slowly withdrew his hand from his pocket. Half the men in the crowd gathered around Gordon, and the others were glancing anxiously about for places of safety. Half the men behind Gordon had their hands on pistols, but dared not draw them.

All eyes were on Gordon. Those who knew him felt that the affair would end in bloodshed.

Gordon looked the bandit straight in the eye.

"Sir, if you claim to be a gentleman, let us settle this affair like gentlemen."

"I am willing to settle it any way you prefer," answered Jesse, quietly.

"Then we will fight a duel."

"When and where?"

"Now and here, if you agree to my conditions."

"Name your conditions."

"I will lay two loaded pistols on the table between us with the muzzles touching. We stand facing each other on opposite sides of the table, and, at the signal, we pick up the pistols and fire."

"I agree to your conditions, and warn you that I can shoot quickest."

"Don't be too sure of that, my friend," said Gordon, with a sneer.

Half the men in the saloon shuddered when they heard the conditions of the proposed duel, and lost no time in getting outside. The others present were evidently friends of Gordon, who proposed to see the affair through. A score of drinks stood on the bar untouched. All interest was now centered on the duel.

While the table and pistols were being placed in position, Frank James kept his eyes on the men scattered about the room. He suspected treachery of some sort, and when he saw Gordon step to one side and whisper something to a villainous-looking man, he was positive the bold major did not intend that this should be a fair fight. Frank kept his own pistols in his hands, ready for instant use, and kept his eyes on every man in the room as near as possible.

CHAPTER XII.

A DUEL AT CLOSE RANGE.

Everything was ready, and the principals took their positions on opposite sides of the small table, on which lay two pistols cocked and ready for instant use.

The man known as Swanson had been selected to give the signal, and took his position at the end of the table.

"Gentlemen, are you ready?"

"Is the man behind you your friend?"

For the first time in his life Jesse James was thrown completely off his guard by Gordon's question. He turned to look behind him, and the movement came near costing him his life. Quick as a flash, Gordon picked up his pistol and fired. So quick was the movement, Swanson did not have time to knock his arm up. But the very quickness of the treacherous shot saved the life of the great bandit, though it was the closest call he had ever had. Gordon had not taken aim, there was no time, and the shot intended for the brain of the man on the other side of the table had only grazed the side of his head, making a very slight flesh wound.

When Gordon saw that he had failed to kill his man, the cowardice of his nature asserted itself. He dropped his pistol and turned to run.

There was a murderous light in the eyes of Jesse James as he picked up his pistol. He was a little dazed by the wound in his head, but he understood the situation in an instant, and his nerves were like steel. Before Gordon made two steps he received a bullet in the head from the revolver of Jesse James, and fell to the floor.

But the fight was not over. When Gordon's friends saw him fall, there was a shout of rage, and in a moment a dozen men had drawn pistols and opened fire. Frank and Jesse made their way toward the door, firing right and left into the crowd, and at every shot a man went down. Their blood was up now, and they shot to kill, but they were outnumbered ten to one.

Then, to the surprise of Gordon's friends, a new Richmond appeared in the field. The man introduced to them by Gordon a few minutes before as Mr. Swanson, had drawn a pistol, and was fighting side by side with the two strangers. The man was Dick Liddell.

The fight was soon over, and when the three des-

peradoes reached the door half a score of men lay on the floor dead or wounded, while the others were crouching behind barrels or boxes to escape the shower of bullets.

The three men knew there was no time to be lost in getting out of the town. Liddell's horse was near by, already saddled. Jesse and Frank ran to the stables where they had left their horses, and in a few moments had saddles and bridles on. When the three men mounted they turned for a moment to look around, and could see men hastening from all parts of the town to the saloon where the desperate battle had taken place, to learn the cause of the shooting.

Putting spurs to their horses, the three daring outlaws were safely out of the town before the citizens thought of pursuit.

If the three bandits thought their adventures were over for that day they were mistaken. Instead of finding rest and quiet in Tennessee, they were finding excitement as fast as they could wish.

The three men rode down the big turnpike road at a swift gallop for a distance of five miles or more, and then turned sharply to the left, taking a road leading up into the hills. Jesse wanted to keep on straight ahead, but Liddell, who was familiar with the country, insisted that they leave the main road. He knew the influence of Major Gordon, and knew that half the men in the country would turn out to hunt down the man who had shot the major and half a score of his friends. Liddell did not want any more fighting. He had something else in view, and he was anxious to reach a place of safety, where he could lay his plans before the James boys.

For two hours the three men rode slowly along the narrow road leading up among the hills. They were beginning to feel pretty safe from pursuit when they were suddenly startled by a command to halt. Wheeling in their saddles, they saw a party of twenty-five well-armed men riding rapidly up behind them. The command to halt had been given by the leader of this party.

Neither Liddell nor the James boys recognized in the party any of the men they had seen in the saloon at Marion, but they had no doubt the party were after them, and they did not halt.

Putting spurs to their horses, the three men dashed ahead, at the same time bending low over their saddles to avoid the shower of bullets sent flying after them.

For a half mile the race continued, and then, as the three men turned a bend in the road, their pursuers were out of sight for a moment. Jesse suddenly pulled up his horse and turned about. The others followed his example.

"We cannot outrun them, we must fight it out here," said Jesse, and the three men, with a pistol in each hand, awaited the coming of their pursuers. They had only a moment to wait.

As the posse turned the bend in the road, they were met by a volley of shots, and the men they had been chasing rode into their midst yelling like demons, and firing right and left.

They were completely surprised, and scattered in all directions, scarcely firing a shot. There was one man in the party, however, who did not lose his head. He was a young fellow, who seemed to be the leader, and had given the command to halt.

The young man, when he saw his companions deserting him, turned his horse directly across the road and stood still.

As the outlaws rode toward him they had to pull their horses quickly to one side to avoid a collision. This was just what he had anticipated, and a moment later, this country youth had taught the daring bandits a very clever ruse in a fight at close quarters on horseback.

By the time they had pulled their horses to one side, Jesse and Frank were on opposite sides of the young man and Liddell was close behind them. They could not fire at this man without danger of hitting each other.

Quick as a flash the young man reached out and caught Jesse's horse by the bridle. The animal was thrown on his haunches so suddenly that his rider was almost thrown from his seat, skillful as he was.

Before Jesse James could recover himself, the young man had the drop on him. But he did not fire. As quick as he glanced at the face of the great bandit, he lowered his pistol and exclaimed:

"This is all a mistake, you are not the men we are after!"

"Well, young fellow, you don't want to make any more such mistakes," said Jesse, who was nettled that he should have been caught so neatly in the trap set for him.

Frank and Liddell rode back as soon as they could pull up their horses, and then the young man said:

"I don't know who you men are, but I know you

have plenty of grit, and you are just the men I want for a little business I have on hand. This affair has all been brought about by my mistake, but fortunately no one is hurt, and it has exposed the character of the men I had with me. I see I cannot trust them when there is any fighting to be done, and I know I can trust you gentlemen. If you are willing to join me in a little trip, I will explain matters to you, and you may count me your friend always. Here is my hand on it."

The four men shook hands.

"Go ahead and tell us what you want. We are always ready for a little fun when there is any to be had," said Jesse, as he dismounted.

"I may want you to do some fighting."

"Well, we can fight a little, when hard pressed."

"Then I will tell you my story."

CHAPTER XIII.

SCOUNDRELS PLOT AGAINST EACH OTHER.

When thieves fall out honest men get their dues, and when villains plot against each other justice sometimes strikes home.

Major Douglass Gordon's confidence in his tool, Sam Cobb, was misplaced. Cobb was something of a schemer himself, and his schemes were all in his own interest. He was a scoundrel by nature and training.

Cobb had long been dissatisfied with his business arrangements with Gordon. He knew that the profits of the illicit business in which they were engaged were enormous, and he thought he ought to receive a larger share of them, as he was doing most of the work, and taking the greatest risk.

When Gordon asked Cobb to abduct Nellie Teale for him, the old moonshiner readily agreed to the proposition, but if Gordon had looked closely he might have noticed a quiet gleam of cunning in the eyes of his partner in crime.

The abduction of the girl gave Cobb the opportunity he had waited months for. With the girl in his possession, abducted by order of his chief, he would have Gordon in his power. Then, if the chief of the moonshiners did not come to his terms he could cut loose from him entirely, and hold the girl as hostage for a truce with her father, the United States marshal.

Up among the hills, near where the stills of the moonshiners were located, there was a large cave containing several chambers, and these had been

litted up for the men who worked at the stills. They were furnished better than the homes of the average mountaineer, and at the same time, in case of attack, the cave could be used as a fortress, which the score of moonshiners could hold against a small army.

In one of the chambers Cobb lived with his wife, and it was agreed between him and Gordon that he would take the girl, Nellie Teale, to this cave, where she was to be kindly cared for by Mrs. Cobb, but to be closely guarded until Gordon could see her.

The plans for the abduction of the girl perfected, Gordon returned home, and arranged to be in a position to prove an alibi, if Colonel Teale should suspect him.

At Mussel Shoals, on the Tennessee River, a few miles south of Marion, a canal was being built by the United States Government, a million dollars having been appropriated for the purpose. The contractors were pushing the work at that time, and had more than one thousand men employed. Among the small traders who had opened stores near the canal work was a young man known as James Swanson. Under the guise of running a grocery store he was selling moonshine whisky to the men employed on the canal, and obtained his supply from Gordon's stills. He and Gordon had become good friends, and the night of the abduction of Nellie Teale Gordon was at Swanson's store. Next day the two men rode over to Marion together. Gordon, by agreement, was to meet Cobb at the saloon there and receive his report.

Instead of meeting Cobb, Major Gordon met Jesse James, as told in the preceding chapter, and his friend, Swanson, proved to be Dick Liddell, an old comrade of the James boys.

Major Gordon was not killed by the bullet from Jesse James' pistol—in fact, he was not seriously hurt. The ball struck him in the back of the head, but glanced to one side, making only a slight flesh wound. He was knocked down and stunned for a moment by the shock, but was on his feet again very soon after the daring bandits left the room.

It was a sorry sight that met the gaze of Major Gordon, when he rose to his feet after his duel with Jesse James.

The room was still filled with the smoke of the desperate battle that had taken place, and the major's friends were lying all about the room, three of them dead and others desperately wounded.

Major Gordon did not dream of the identity of the

man he had challenged to fight a duel across a table. If he had known who the man was he would never have proposed such a fight. The proposition was a bluff on his part, he had no idea the stranger would agree to it. But when his proposition was accepted there in the presence of his followers and friends, he could not show the white feather. At most, Gordon was a coward, but he must keep up his reputation as a fighter, or his influence as a politician would be gone.

When he realized that he must fight the stranger on the terms he had proposed, Gordon deliberately decided to get the drop by a ruse, and shoot the man down without giving him a chance to defend himself. He succeeded in getting the drop, but failed to kill his man, and the affair came very near costing him his own life.

No one in Marion suspected the real identity of the two men who had come into the place that morning so quietly and cleaned out a saloon full of men who were always "on the shoot," as the natives expressed it, before they had been there two hours.

Major Gordon did not attempt any pursuit of the strangers. The fact was, he did not care to meet them again. He was surprised and alarmed when told that his friend Swanson fought with the strangers, and then rode away with them.

He wondered who the man could be, but said nothing to the people in the village.

Without Major Gordon to lead them, the men vanquished in the bloody fight in the saloon did not think of pursuing the desperate bandits.

Two hours after the fight in the saloon Sam Cobb rode into Marion, and was met at the hotel by Gordon. The latter engaged a room, and in a few minutes the two moonshiners were locked in to talk over the events of the night.

"Did you secure the girl?" asked Gordon.

"Yes; had no trouble in getting away with her."

"Good; now I'll show Colonel Teale who holds the winning cards in this game."

"What do you intend to do with the girl?"

"Well, I expect to make her Mrs. Gordon for one thing, and I shall also hold her to make terms with her father."

"Where do I come in on the deal?"

"Oh, I'll pay you well for taking care of the girl!"

"That is not enough."

"What do you want?"

"A larger share of the profits in our business, and a paper stating forth your connection with it, and your signature to that paper."

"You are a fool!"

"Not now. I have been one, but I am coming to my senses."

"What do you mean?"

"That I have been in your power long enough, and propose to reverse the order of things."

Major Gordon glared at his tool and confederate a full minute before he made reply. The truth was slowly dawning on him. Cobb proposed to get a hold on him that he could use at any time. Major Gordon thought to avoid an open rupture with Cobb, and decided to try a little diplomacy. He changed the subject abruptly.

"Where is the girl?"

"She is where you can't find her."

"What do you mean? Come, I want no nonsense now."

"Well, I stole the girl, and I took her to a place where she will be safe from all her friends, including Major Gordon. She is my prisoner."

Gordon turned pale with rage. There was no longer any doubt that Cobb was playing false with him. He made an effort to control his anger and asked:

"What do you demand to turn the girl over to me and obey my instructions in the future?"

"Ten thousand dollars down, a half interest in the still, an agreement from you that if I am captured by Teale or his men you will secure my release."

Major Gordon suddenly sprang to his feet, with a pistol in his hand, which he pointed at the head of his lieutenant.

"You scoundrel," he hissed. "I'll blow your brains out, if you don't tell me where that girl is."

Cobb did not move. He was perfectly cool, and looked at the major and his pistol without a tremor.

"Put up your shooter and talk business."

"I'll kill you."

"No, you won't. You dare not. If you killed me, you would be arrested for murder, and besides, you could never find the girl."

The man's coolness of words and manner aroused Gordon to frenzy, but he did not shoot. He realized the force of Cobb's argument, and put up his pistol.

"I'll have your heart's blood for this," he hissed, as he resumed his seat.

Cobb only laughed. The major's anger seemed to amuse him, but he read murder in the man's eyes, and watched him closely.

"Well, do you agree to my proposition, or do you want time to think it over?"

"Give me time to think it over."

"Take all the time you want, but remember Teale and his men are out on a raid; the stills may be destroyed at any time."

"Get your men together and defend them. You can hold the pass to the hills against a thousand revenue officers."

"Well, in the meantime don't forget that the girl is in my keeping, and you need not try to find her. If you attempt to follow me, I will shoot you down like a dog. We may as well understand each other. You agree to my terms, or it will be war to the knife between us, and I think I can put an end to your political influence in this section by letting the public know the source of your income. When you want to see me, you can send a message to the cave; in the meantime I will communicate with Colonel Teale, and see what sort of terms I can make with him."

Major Gordon ground his teeth with rage, but he arose and opened the door for Cobb to depart. The latter stepped to the door and then turned about. He was just in time. Gordon had drawn his pistol, and in another moment would have sent a bullet crashing through the head of Cobb. Again the old moonshiner laughed as Gordon lowered his pistol.

"I suspected some trick, major, and I'll let you go out first," he said, very quietly.

Gordon put his pistol in his pocket, and walked downstairs without a word.

When Colonel Teale found the trail of the men he was following did not lead toward the hiding-place of the moonshiners, he was surprised and alarmed for his daughter's safety. Until then he had believed that his daughter had been carried off by the moonshiners, who doubtless hoped to secure immunity from arrest by holding her as a hostage for their own safety. If such was the case, the brave officer was confident he would soon be able to find her and secure her release. But now he was thoroughly alarmed for the safety of his child.

There was only one thing to be done. He must follow the trail until the men were overtaken. As

Colonel Teale was about to give the order to his men to move forward, Tom Hewitt suggested a plan which was at once approved of by the entire posse.

Hewitt's plan was to divide the force, and while half of them followed the trail, the other half would ride direct to the hills, to the hiding-place of the moonshiners. He argued, with some show of reason, that no one except the moonshiners could have an object in the abduction of Miss Teale, and if she were really in their hands, they had resorted to some trick to throw pursuers off their track. They had probably made their way to their hiding-place by some roundabout way known only to themselves. By part of the posse pushing on direct to the home of the outlaws, they might be caught by surprise, and Miss Teale rescued before they had time to remove her to some secret hiding-place.

Colonel Teale at once agreed to his plan, and placed Hewitt in command of the party who were to push on to the hills direct, while he continued on the trail they had followed from the house.

This arrangement was highly satisfactory to Hewitt, who was anxious to rescue the girl himself, if possible, and he believed she would be found at the hiding-place of the moonshiners.

The party separated, and Hewitt, at the head of twenty men, galloped away to the hills. After an hour's hard riding, they came in sight of the James boys and Dick Liddell. Then followed the fight and chase related in the preceding chapter.

Tom Hewitt was much chagrined by the cowardly conduct of the men with him. He did not recognize the three bandits; in fact, he did not care who they might be. He had found three men of undoubted courage, and he knew they were not moonshiners.

While his own men were seeking places of safety in the hills or were riding back toward their homes as rapidly as possible, Hewitt briefly related to the three strangers the object of his trip. From his nervous, excited manner they correctly surmised that he was in love with the girl, and realized that if he could rescue her from her captors, he would be a hero in her eyes.

Jesse James had taken quite a fancy to the brave young fellow, and at once agreed to help him rescue the young lady. Frank and Liddell were ready for anything that promised excitement and adventure, and the four men were soon riding rapidly toward the den of the moonshiners.

Tom Hewitt knew every foot of ground in that region, and led the way direct to the cave. As they approached the hiding-place of the outlaws, they slackened their pace, and advanced with more caution. At last they were in sight of the entrance, and not a soul had been seen. Dismounting, they fastened their horses, and moved forward on foot with greater caution than before. The entrance to the cave was soon reached, and, with a pistol in each hand, Tom Hewitt led the way inside. They moved forward from room to room, carefully looking about them, but the cave was empty.

Nellie Teale was not there.

CHAPTER XV.

RESCUE OF NELLIE TEALE.

Major Gordon had no intention of agreeing to the demands of Sam Cobb.

He knew Cobb well enough to realize that he was a cunning and dangerous foe, and he determined not only to get the girl away from him, but to get Cobb out of his way. He would betray him into the hands of the revenue officers, and make sure that enough evidence was secured to send him to prison for a long term.

Notwithstanding Cobb's warning when he left Marion after his stormy interview with Major Gordon, he was followed. Gordon rightly suspected that Cobb would go direct to the place where he had left Nellie Teale.

Major Gordon was giving little thought to the possible capture and destruction of his illicit stills. He had made up his mind that Nellie Teale should be his wife by fair means or foul, and until that purpose was accomplished he cared little what became of his illicit whisky business, so long as his connection with it was not made public.

When Sam Cobb left Marion he felt confident Gordon would make no attempt to follow him after the warning he had received. But he did not know the crafty major as well as he thought he did. Gordon would take desperate chances to accomplish an object on which he had set his heart. He had made up his mind to find Nellie Teale and first get her away from Cobb, then make her his wife without delay. He knew she would never willingly consent to marry him, but his cunning brain had devised a devilish scheme by which he expected to force her to consent.

Cobb followed the turnpike road south from Marion, some seven miles, then he turned to the left, taking a narrow path, which by winding in and out among the rough hills and narrow ravines led to a hiding-place, the existence of which Cobb believed was known only to himself and a few of his most trusted followers.

Major Gordon had in his employ a negro known as "Legs," on account of the great length of his lower limbs. Legs was a sort of body servant, much attached to Gordon, and would obey him like a dog. The negro's powers of endurance were wonderful, and he could walk and run faster than any man in Tennessee.

When Sam Cobb rode away from the hotel in Marion, Gordon called his faithful servant, Legs, and told him to follow Cobb, locate the place where he stopped, so it could be found, and then hasten back without being seen by the man he had followed.

Legs nodded, and by a grunt signified that he understood, then started at once after the man now riding rapidly out of town. As long as Cobb kept to the turnpike, the negro had to keep on the run to keep him in sight, but when the moonshiner turned into the footpath, leading to the hills, it was an easy matter to follow him.

Legs had followed Cobb for two hours along the tortuous course of the mountain path, when he saw him turn aside and ride up a narrow, densely wooded ravine between two high projecting hills. At the upper end of the ravine, one of the most secluded spots to be found in that section of the State, there was a rude cabin. Cobb dismounted, and hurriedly entered the cabin. A few moments later he came out, unsaddled and fed his horse. Then Legs, who was watching from a safe distance, carefully noted the surroundings so he could find the place again, when he hurried back to inform his master of his discovery.

Major Gordon could not repress a smile of satisfaction when the negro returned with the report that he had located Cobb's hiding-place, and he tossed Legs a handful of silver coin, as a reward for his services.

That night Major Gordon saw one of the men from the stills in town, and gave him a note to be delivered to Sam Cobb. The note read:

"My Dear Fellow: You and I cannot afford to quarrel. Meet me in town, at the hotel, at 4 o'clock p. m., to-morrow. I will agree to your terms.

"GORDON."

"I think that will work," said Gordon to himself, after he had cautioned the man to be sure and deliver the note that night, or very early the next morning. Then he went home to complete his arrangements to outwit his tool, Cobb, and get possession of Nellie Teale.

Sam Cobb received Major Gordon's note, and next day he started to keep the appointment. While Cobb was on his way to meet Gordon, the latter, guided by the negro, Legs, was making his way to the cabin in the hills in search of Nellie Teale. He found the cabin without difficulty, arriving there a few moments later than Cobb reached the appointed meeting-place in Marion.

At the door of the cabin Gordon was met by a tall, muscular-looking woman, with a pleasant face, but whose flashing black eyes indicated courage of the most reckless character. The woman was rather neatly dressed, but around her waist there was a broad leather belt, from which dangled two six-shooters of large caliber.

"Who are you and what do you want?" asked the woman, somewhat abruptly.

Gordon lifted his hat, and, with a bow of mock politeness, said:

"I am Major Gordon, from Marion, and I am looking for a very dear friend of mine, a young lady who has suddenly disappeared from home, and we fear she may be lost somewhere in these hills. Have you seen anything of her?"

"No."

Gordon was nonplussed for a moment. He was satisfied the girl was concealed in the cabin, and he determined to enter and make sure. It was evident the woman was not going to invite him inside, so he tried a little diplomacy.

"Madam, I am very tired; if you will permit, I will go in and rest a while."

"Well, I won't permit you."

This confirmed Gordon's suspicions that the girl was a prisoner in the cabin, and he determined to enter at any hazard. The woman's manner angered him, and he decided to try a little bluff.

"Madam, I believe the young lady I am looking for is in this house, and a prisoner. I am going to satisfy myself on that point, whether you wish it or not. Stand aside."

Gordon stepped forward, but before he reached the

door the woman had drawn one of her revolvers, and with it pointed at his breast she ordered him to stop.

He was forced to obey, but his face was white with passion now, and he determined not to be baffled by a woman.

Major Gordon began to parley with the woman in the door, and kept talking until he threw her sufficiently off her guard to put up her revolver.

While talking to the woman, Gordon had very slowly and cautiously advanced a little nearer the door. Suddenly he sprang forward, throwing his weight against the woman, knocking her down. Leaping over her prostrate body, he was in the room, and glancing around, was delighted to find Nellie Teale, seated in a chair in one corner of the cabin. He had been delayed too long already, and he realized that Cobb might return at any moment, so he decided to waste no more time. Calling Legs, Gordon ordered him to disarm the woman and bind her securely. By this time the woman had struggled to her feet, and fire seemed to flash from her eyes.

As Legs started to enter the cabin, the woman drew one of her big revolvers, and shot him through the heart, killing him instantly.

"You'll have me bound by a negro, will you?" she hissed. Her face was almost purple with rage, and Gordon shrank back in terror when she turned the still smoking revolver on him. "I've heard of the chivalry of the Southern gentleman," said the woman; "I wonder if you are a fair sample of them, Major Gordon?"

The woman suddenly drew a rawhide whip from the folds of her dress, and with a well-directed blow she brought the terrible lash down on Gordon's face with great force before he could raise a hand to defend himself. The whip cut skin and flesh like a knife, and the blood poured from a long gash extending almost across the man's face.

Gordon, with a howl of rage and pain, attempted to draw his pistol, but the woman had the drop on him, and with her black eyes still flashing fire she warned him to desist.

Nellie Teale was trembling all over with fright.

The shooting of the negro, the terrible punishment of Gordon for his insult, had frightened Miss Teale almost out of her wits, but she did not faint or cry out. With blanched face, she watched and waited to see what would happen next.

Nellie Teale had been brought to this cabin the

night she was abducted from her home by Sam Cobb, and placed in charge of this woman. Cobb had told her the woman was his wife, and she knew no better until the woman herself disclosed her real identity to Major Gordon. She had been gentle and kind in her treatment of the girl, and Miss Teale had nothing to complain of except that she was deprived of her liberty. But the woman who stood there with a revolver in her hand, and her black eyes glowing and flashing like coals of fire, did not seem like the same individual who had cared for Miss Teale as kindly and gently as her own mother could have done.

"Is that man your friend?" asked the woman, turning to her prisoner.

"No, no, Heaven forbid!" cried Nellie, in alarm.

"I think I now understand you and your game," said the woman, with a sneer, still keeping her revolver leveled at Gordon. "You had this girl abducted by men in your employ, and now you seek to force her to marry you. Am I right?"

Gordon did not answer. He was afraid to admit the truth in the presence of Nellie, and not knowing how much of his plans the other knew, he dared not deny the charge.

"You scoundrel! It would serve you right if I sent a bullet through your black heart," and as the woman said this she advanced a step nearer Gordon, which caused that cowering and blood-stained gentleman to back away and beg her not to shoot him.

"I'll let you go this time, but keep out of my way, and in future, when you feel like insulting a woman, remember the scar that will be on your face. You can go, and take the body of your negro with you."

Gordon turned to leave the cabin, but at the door he stopped suddenly. Four men were riding up the ravine at full gallop, straight toward the cabin. Could it be Sam Cobb? The thought of meeting Cobb then and there caused Gordon to tremble. But as the men came nearer, he breathed a sigh of relief; Cobb was not in the party.

The four men rode straight to the door of the cabin, and the young man who seemed to be the leader of the party, at two bounds leaped from his horse and into the room. He did not recognize Gordon, on account of the blood which covered his face.

"Oh, Mr. Hewitt!" cried Nellie Teale at sight of the newcomer, and then, to prove how much overjoyed she was, she fainted away and would have fallen had not Tom Hewitt caught her in his arms.

He did not lay her down, but held her in his arms until she regained consciousness.

The woman briefly explained to her friends the cause of Major Gordon's blood-stained face, and the shooting of the negro.

In spite of the blood that covered the lower part of his face, Jesse James recognized Major Gordon as his late opponent in the duel at the saloon in Marion. He was a little surprised, for he thought his aim had been true when he fired at the major.

Gordon also recognized the man he had deliberately tried to murder, and he thought the jig was up with him now, but Jesse scarcely glanced at him and made no movement to draw a weapon.

Still holding the girl by the arm, Tom Hewitt stepped forward, and in the exuberance of his joy shook hands with the three men who had assisted him in his search for Nellie.

"I can't find words to thank you enough for your assistance," he said. "I don't know who you are, and it does not matter; you can always count me your friend."

Major Gordon ground his teeth in rage, but said nothing. He realized that his game was up, and his greatest anxiety now was to escape arrest.

The sound of rapidly approaching hoofbeats now attracted the attention of the little party, and, looking down the ravine, they saw a horseman approaching at a swift gallop. It was Sam Cobb. When Gordon failed to meet him according to agreement, the moonshiner's suspicions were at once aroused, and, mounting his horse, he rode at full speed to the cabin in the hills.

As Cobb approached, he saw the horses standing outside the cabin, and, recognizing Gordon's among them, he jumped at the conclusion that the major had come with a party of his friends to carry away the girl, Nellie Teale.

When he saw Cobb coming, Major Gordon decided to make a break for liberty. He thought if Cobb was informed of the true situation of affairs, he would seek to save himself by at once betraying Gordon's connection with the abduction and the illicit whisky business. Gordon believed the three men with Tom Hewitt were revenue officers or detectives.

Watching his chances, Gordon suddenly sprang out at the door, when Cobb was fifty yards away, and tried to reach his horse. He was too late. With a shout of rage, Sam Cobb drew his pistol and fired

three shots in rapid succession. One of the bullets struck Gordon in the head, and he fell dead.

Sam Cobb wheeled his horse around, and rode off down the ravine at a break-neck speed.

The woman took possession of Major Gordon's horse, and Tom Hewitt took Nellie Teale behind him on his own horse. In this order the little party left the cabin, leaving the dead bodies of Major Gordon and the negro behind. When they reached the big turnpike road, Hewitt and the girl said good-by to their companions, and turned toward home, while the others rode away to the south, in search of fresh adventures.

They found adventure and excitement in abundance sooner than they expected.

CHAPTER XVI.

A GOVERNMENT PAYMASTER ROBBED.

The James boys and Liddell rode slowly toward the beautiful town of Florence on the Tennessee River, and, as they rode along, they discussed plans for the future.

Liddell had a plan of his own, in which he would need some help. While running a grocery store at the Government works, on the Mussel Shoals Canal, he had been looking about for an opportunity to make money faster than it could be made by selling groceries. A Government paymaster visited the works once a month to pay off the contractors. The monthly payroll was nearly fifty thousand dollars. The paymaster made his headquarters in the town of Florence, his checks from Washington were cashed at the bank there, and, on pay days, he drove out to the works in a buggy, sometimes accompanied by one clerk or assistant, but often alone. It would be an easy matter to meet the paymaster on his way to the canal and relieve him of the cash.

Liddell's suggestion was considered a good one, and the James boys willingly agreed to go into the affair with him.

The first thing to be done was for some one to make the acquaintance of the paymaster, learn his habits, and find out from him what time he would start from town on the next payday, who would accompany him, and if he went armed.

All their plans arranged, the trio separated, and the following day three horse traders from Kentucky

arrived in Florence and took rooms at a quiet boarding-house.

One morning the three Kentucky horse traders had their horses saddled and left town. They told the keeper of the livery stable that they might return with a carload of horses for sale in a short time, but they were not sure about it.

It happened that morning that the paymaster, Colonel Campbell, was driving out to the work with that week's payroll in his buggy.

He was five miles from town, and driving slowly along over a rough bit of road when he saw three horsemen approaching.

As the horsemen came nearer he was not pleased with their looks.

They rode up, two on one side of the buggy and one on the other.

"Is this Colonel Campbell?" asked the man who seemed to be the leader.

"Yes; what do you want?"

"On your way to pay off down at the canal?"

"What of it if I am?"

"We will relieve you of the trouble, colonel. Hand over the tin box now, and be quick about it."

Colonel Campbell was a brave man, and he did not intend to give up the money in his charge without an effort to defend it.

Colonel Campbell reached for his revolver, but it had been tampered with.

Great as the odds were against him, the brave paymaster would have made a fight to save the money if he had been armed, but he could only curse his own stupidity in not examining his revolver before he started. Resistance now would be madness, but the loss of the money meant the loss of his position, and disgrace, if nothing worse. He had taken too much risk. Instead of taking a guard with him, he had walked right into the trap set for him by the robbers.

Dick Liddell dismounted and secured the tin box containing the fifty thousand dollars of Government money.

"Sorry to put you to any trouble, colonel, as you have behaved so nicely," said Jesse James; "but we will be compelled to detain you here until some of your friends happen to pass this way."

Colonel Campbell was ordered to get down, and then with one of his own buggy lines the robbers bound him securely, and tied him to a tree.

This done, they divided the fifty thousand dollars.

It was decided by the three robbers, after a brief consultation, to make their way back West without delay. They were not familiar with the country in Tennessee, and they might be caught in a trap if they remained in that vicinity too long.

Mounting their horses, the three robbers rode rapidly away to the north. They had decided to get out of Tennessee as soon as possible. When the news of the robbery of the paymaster got abroad, the climate there might not agree with them.

The three bandits were barely out of sight when a farmer came along and released Colonel Campbell. The colonel lost no time in getting back to Florence and reporting the matter to the sheriff.

He gave the sheriff an accurate description of the three bandits.

The sheriff was an officer famed in that section for catching criminals, and he boasted that when once he got fairly started on the trail of a criminal the man never escaped him.

Colonel Campbell offered a reward of one thousand dollars for the capture of the robbers, and another thousand for the recovery of the stolen money, and this roused the sheriff to instant action.

Quickly gathering a posse, he was soon hot on the trail of the desperadoes.

After some delay they picked up the outlaws' trail and urged their horses on at full speed.

The robbers, not knowing that Colonel Campbell had been set free, were quietly resting by the roadside when the posse swung in sight.

They sprang on their horses and were away in a flash.

But the posse had come within range and for half a mile a running fire was kept up.

Suddenly a cry of pain from Liddell caused the James boys to pull up their horses.

Liddell had been hit. A bullet struck him in the shoulder, and the bridle reins dropped from his hand.

Just then another volley was fired, and Liddell's horse fell dead, throwing him to the ground with great force.

He was on his feet in a few seconds and Jesse James, scarcely checking the speed of his horse reached down and catching Liddell around the waist, attempted to lift the wounded bandit up in front of him on his own horse.

"Let me go! Save yourselves; don't mind me," cried Liddell.

"I'm not going to desert you."

"But your horse can't carry us both. Let me down, and get out of this. They are too many for us this time."

"Brace up, and I'll get you out all right," cried Jesse, trying to pull Liddell up to the saddle.

"You can't do it. Go on, don't mind me."

"I'm not a coward, to desert a friend."

"We'll all be captured. Let me go, and get away. I'll check that mob."

Again Jesse refused to desert his friend.

Liddell drew his revolver, and pointed it at Jesse.

"Go on, I say. I got you into this snafu, and you sha'n't be caught on my account."

The bandit's eyes blazed. He was desperately in earnest in his determination not to let the James boys endanger their own safety trying to save him.

Jesse James was forced to release his friend, but as he spurred his horse forward, leaving Liddell to face the posse alone, he shouted back:

"We'll come back for you, Dick!"

Jesse and Frank, when they realized that Liddell would not let them assist him, put spurs to their horses, and were soon out of sight. Old Billy Haynes was right when he told them they had secured the fastest horses in Tennessee. Left alone, and on foot, Dick Liddell boldly turned to face his pursuers, and rapidly fired the three shots left in one of his revolvers. Then he felt a sharp, stinging pain in the side of his head, and sank to the ground unconscious. A bullet had grazed the side of his head, making only a slight flesh wound, but it knocked him senseless for a moment.

When Liddell regained consciousness, he was securely bound and surrounded by half the sheriff's posse. The others had continued the chase after the James boys.

As soon as Liddell was able to get up, he was placed on a horse behind one of his captors, and taken to the county jail at Florence, where he was locked in the strongest cell. A physician was allowed to dress the wound in his shoulder.

The members of the posse who had continued in pursuit of the James boys soon gave up the chase, and returned to Florence.

It had been an exciting and disastrous day for the sheriff. Two of his men had been killed and seven

others wounded. Only one of the robbers had been captured, and he would have escaped if his horse had not been killed.

After an hour of hard riding, Jesse and Frank pulled up their horses and allowed them to walk. They heard nothing more of the pursuing posse, and rightly concluded that the officers had given up the chase, content with the capture of Liddell. They had no intention of leaving their companion to his fate, but decided it would be best to wait a few days until the excitement had somewhat subsided, before they attempted his rescue.

The two bandits rode some twenty miles north of the scene of their fight with the sheriff's posse, and stopped at the house of a farmer for the night. They were worn out from their long, hard ride and slept soundly. They were aroused about seven o'clock the next morning by a loud knocking at the door of their room and an order to get up.

Jesse arose and unlocked the door. As he did so it was pushed open, and a dozen men sprang into the room. They were all farmers except one, who seemed to be the leader of the party.

"I am hunting the great outlaws, the James boys. I am a Pinkerton detective," said the man who acted as leader.

"Well, what are you disturbing us for?" asked Jesse.

"You are strangers in this locality, and must give an account of yourselves."

The great bandit laughed. He had caught on to the situation, and felt no alarm. This man was an amateur detective, who thought that chance might enable him to secure the big rewards offered for the famous bandits. Learning that two strange men were in the neighborhood, he had summoned a crowd of farmers to assist him, and was going to see who they were. It was plain he did not recognize the two men. Jesse was amused at the fellow, and determined to have some fun out of him.

"Send for old Sergeant Billy Haynes. He fit with Quantrell endurin' of the wah, an' he ought to know the James boys," suggested one of the farmers.

This suggestion was acted on at once. It was only half a mile to Sergeant Billy's house, and a messenger was sent for him at once, while the others all remained to watch the strangers, and see that they did not get away.

In a little while the messenger returned with

sergeant Billy. When the old man looked at the two strangers he manifested no surprise whatever.

"I don't know the names of the gentlemen," he said; "but they live somewhere down the river, and shoe their horses for them."

Billy Haynes had promised not to betray his old comrades, and he had kept his word. As he left the room a meaning glance, understood by both, passed between him and Jesse James.

"Very sorry to have troubled you, gentlemen," said the alleged Pinkerton detective, and I am also sorry you are not the great robbers."

"Suppose we were the James boys, what would you do?" asked Jesse.

"Take you to prison at once."

"Would you?" and Jesse laughed.

"Of course I would, and take you back to Missouri."

"Well, Mr. Detective, we are the James boys; come on and take us to prison."

As Jesse said this, he and Frank both drew their revolvers and faced the crowd.

At sight of the four big revolvers, the dozen farmers fell over each other in their anxiety to get out of the room.

The detective made no effort to arrest the two bandits. His face turned white as a sheet, and turning he fled from the house faster than any of the frightened farmers.

The two bandits enjoyed a good laugh, and then they ate their breakfast without fear of interruption.

CHAPTER XVII.

PLANNING TO FRUSTRATE A LYNCHING.

While eating their breakfast, Jesse and Frank James discussed plans for the rescue of Dick Liddell, as though it was a very simple matter to take a prisoner from a jail situated in the center of a town of several thousand inhabitants.

The plan they decided on was a bold one, but circumstances made one even bolder necessary.

Their plan arranged, they paid their bill, mounted their horses, and rode away. The Pinkerton detective did not follow them; in fact, it was several hours before he stopped running.

When the news of the bloody battle between the sheriff's posse and the three robbers was generally

known in Florence and the surrounding country the wildest excitement prevailed. Hundreds of men gathered about the jail, and wanted to take the prisoner out and hang him to the nearest limb. With great difficulty the sheriff prevented the organization of a mob, and that night he placed a strong guard at the jail as a precaution.

No attack was made on the jail that night, but next day, when it was reported that one of the men wounded in the fight with the robbers was dead, the rage of the people knew no bounds. A big crowd gathered on the streets early in the day, and continued to increase in numbers. Farmers left their work and came to town anxious to take a hand in the work of stringing up the daring robber.

Late in the afternoon the crowd began to gather in the vicinity of the jail. The sheriff tried to drive them back, but he was overpowered, the guards at the jail door were disarmed, and in a few minutes a mob was in possession of the building. The officers were powerless, and decided that any resistance on their part would be worse than useless.

The jail doors were battered down, and in a few minutes Liddell was in the hands of the mob.

The daring bandit was given no chance to defend himself. The howling mob of angry men broke down the door of his cell with a sledge-hammer, and soon had him bound hand and foot.

The prisoner was dragged out into the public square of the town in the midst of the howling mob.

A rope had already been provided, and a man who had taken part in many similar affairs soon tied a hangman's knot and the noose was ready.

"String him up! Here's a limb!" shouted the mob, and the helpless prisoner was dragged toward the nearest tree.

"Over the limb there with the rope!" shouted the mob, and in a moment the rope was thrown over a strong limb, and the noose dangled just above Liddell's head.

It seemed that the prisoner was doomed. The public square was packed with men and boys. The mob numbered fully a thousand determined men, most of them armed, and the two thousand people present out of curiosity all sympathized with the mob.

The noose was around Liddell's neck, and fifty men held the rope, waiting for the command to pull him up.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A LYNCHING INTERRUPTED.

Then there came a sudden and unexpected interruption.

Half-a-dozen pistol shots, fired in rapid succession, were heard, and then two men, mounted on superb horses, and leading a third horse, rode into the crowd, yelling like demons.

The two men held a revolver in each hand, and their commands to clear the way were instantly obeyed.

Plunging madly through the crowd, now scattering in all directions, the two horsemen were riding straight to the tree, where Liddell stood with the rope about his neck.

Again they fired their revolvers, and the mob scattered faster than before. Men fell over each other in their mad rush to get out of the way of the two daring horsemen.

The mob that a few moments before had defied the law, and shouted in glee over the prospect of a daylight lynching, had suddenly changed to a frightened crowd of men, all seeking places of safety.

Right through the crowd the two men urged their horses until they reached Liddell. Then they pulled up for a moment, one of them leaped from his horse, and in a moment had cut the cords that bound the prisoner. Then he cut the rope that hung over the limb, leaving the noose still dangling about the prisoner's neck. There was no time to remove it.

Liddell was then assisted to mount the horse led by his rescuers, a revolver was placed in his hand, and then the three men dashed away through the crowd, and out of the town.

Right and left they fired, and yelled like mad demons as they rode out of the town, sending the frightened inhabitants into or under their houses in search of places of security from the flying bullets. Never was a mob so quickly and thoroughly dispersed.

A mob of a thousand men had been broken up and driven to cover inside of five minutes by two men.

The daring rescuers of Liddell were none other than Jesse and Frank James. They arrived in the nick of time. If they had been three minutes later, Dick Liddell would have been lynched.

The three outlaws were out of sight, galloping away to the south, before the dazed and frightened men,

who, a few moments before, had constituted a howling mob, realized fully what had happened.

When their senses began to return they gathered about the tree, and looked at the piece of rope that still hung over the limb. Then they fully understood that the two men had been there, and had cheated them of their intended victim.

In a few minutes they began to get mad again. The desperadoes were out of sight and hearing now. The temper of the mob again rose fast and furious.

"We must catch them," said one of the leaders.

There was a shout of approval. Men began to saddle their horses in a hurry, and in twenty minutes a posse of two hundred mounted men were ready to begin the chase after the three bandits. They had learned some valuable experience from the previous fight with the same men, and this time the pursuers carried guns. Rifles and shotguns of all sizes and descriptions were brought, and the posse that started in pursuit of the James boys and Liddell looked like a regiment of cavalry.

When they were safely out of the town, the three bandits pulled up their horses, and rode very slowly. They did not fear pursuit, and were in no hurry to get away. They knew that the mob was very thoroughly demoralized, and would probably not attempt any pursuit. The three men enjoyed a good laugh over the affair.

They rode along in a slow walk for two hours, and then they were suddenly surprised by the sound of galloping horses in their rear. They pulled up, and looked around. Just turning the summit of a hill, half a mile behind them, the three bandits beheld what seemed to be a small army.

"Those fellows don't seem to have enough yet," said Jesse.

"Look at their guns. They think to down us at long range this time," said Liddell.

"Well, we'll give them another lesson, and this time we'll make it one they won't forget in a hurry."

The three bandits pulled their horses out of the road, and waited for the pursuing posse to come up. They had not long to wait. With loud curses and yells, the posse rode on, keeping well together.

They were only fifty yards away now, and the time for action had come.

With Jesse in the lead, the three bandits put spurs to their horses, and dashed into the road, and straight toward the head of the column of pursuers.

their bridle reins lay on the saddles, and each man held a big revolver in each hand.

Firing and yelling like mad, they rode directly at their pursuers. At the first fire from the revolvers of the bandits the pursuers in front wheeled their horses round to fly.

The attack was so sudden and unexpected, they did not think of resistance. Not one of them fired a shot.

As those in front turned about they collided with those in the rear, and in a moment the pursuing posse was a struggling mass of men and horses.

But the terrible bandits were pressing forward, and it was wonderful how quick that mass of men and horses had turned tail and were going full speed back to Florence.

It was another complete event, without even the excitement of a fight.

This thing was getting monotonous to Jesse James. He wanted some fun and excitement now.

"I'm going to ride back into that town, and run those fellows to the woods," said Jesse.

The others tried to dissuade him, but he was determined to have a little genuine excitement, and they agreed to join him.

"Better let our horses rest a while," suggested Liddell.

They were near a farm-house, and there they secured food for their horses and themselves, and rested for an hour. Then they mounted and galloped away toward Florence to clear out the town.

Half-way back to Florence there was a short stretch of timber, where the undergrowth was very thick on both sides of the road.

The three bandits had reached the middle of this timber, when they were suddenly startled by a shot, only a short distance ahead.

The shot was a signal. Instantly armed men seemed to spring from behind every tree and bush. A hundred guns seemed to be leveled at the three men.

They were surrounded on all sides.

Never before had they been caught in such a close place.

"Throw up your hands and surrender!"

"Boys, we must cut through their line," said Jesse. The three men, with pistols in each hand, put to their horses and dashed madly forward.

CHAPTER XIX.

A DASH FOR LIBERTY.

"Keep together, boys. Cut a gap through the line, and when you shoot make every shot count."

With this advice hurriedly given by Jesse James, the three bandits set their teeth hard and spurred their horses forward for a mad dash through the line of men to liberty.

As they rode forward, they fired to the right and left, and in front of them.

A few scattering shots were fired in return, but as the three horsemen dashed on there was a break in the line in front of them.

No man in all that posse was brave enough to face these three desperate men. Some of them took refuge behind trees, others fell flat on the ground, and some ran away as fast as their legs would carry them.

The sheriff shouted in vain to his men to stand firm and shoot down the outlaws. It was certain death to face those three desperadoes, and the men in the line loved their lives too well to stand and receive the deadly fire from six revolvers.

Through the broad gap cleared for them, the three bandits rode to liberty. This time they feared no further pursuit, and soon pulled their horses down to a walk.

When the sheriff planned that ambuscade, he was sure of getting the three men who had given him so much trouble, but again he had underestimated the desperate daring of the men he had set out to capture. They would die rather than surrender, and they had been surrounded too many times before to have any fear of their ability to cut a way through the lines.

After riding a short distance, the outlaws came to a halt to talk over their future course. Their trip to Tennessee in search of rest and quiet had so far yielded them only the liveliest kind of excitement.

Starting on again, the three bandits had reached a large, old-fashioned farmhouse, and there they secured lodgings for the night. In their room they talked over various plans for the future, and finally agreed that as they were all well supplied with money, they would separate for a while and enjoy a season of rest and quiet.

CHAPTER XX.

AN EXCITING DANCE.

When next heard from the James boys were in the southern part of the State.

Nearby there was a small settlement of industrious farmers and cattlemen.

They boldly entered the town, posing as a couple of Government scouts from Utah awaiting orders from Washington.

The next day they visited the homes of several of the natives, and when one of the old cattlemen invited them to attend a dance at his cabin that night they promptly accepted.

"All the gals for ten miles around will be thar," said the old cattleman, "but you want to be careful and don't make thar sweethearts jealous. You might get into trouble if you did."

"Oh, we'll take care of ourselves, never fear," laughed Jesse.

The two outlaws arrived at the cabin of the old cattleman about nine o'clock that night, and found the dance in progress. It was as the old man had said, all the girls for ten miles around were there, and there were, at least, three men to every girl.

Some of the young cattlemen and farmers did not welcome the newcomers, but not so the girls. The latter admired the handsome and fearless-looking men, and, better still, both the outlaws were graceful dancers. They had no trouble in finding partners for every set, and they always selected the best-looking girls.

Jesse was especially attentive to a pretty black-eyed maiden, who was easily the best dancer of all the women present.

Once when he went up to claim her hand for the set then forming Jesse noticed that the young cattleman who had been talking to her shot an angry glance at him, but he paid no attention to the man.

As soon as the set was ended, and Jesse had found a seat for his partner, he was approached by the young cattleman.

"I want a word with you," said the young fellow, touching the outlaw on the arm and leading the way to the door.

"Well, what is it?" Jesse asked, impatiently.

"That is my sweetheart you have been dancing with."

"Well, she is a fine girl."

"Don't dance with her any more."

"Why not?"

"Because you have been paying her too much attention to-night already for a stranger."

"Well, I shall dance with her again, if she will let me, and I think she will."

"You will do so at your peril."

"Do you threaten me?"

"Don't dance with my girl again," and with that the young man turned and entered the cabin.

The outlaw smiled. He was amused at the young man's jealousy, and was enjoying the dance too much to be angry. He at once returned to the black-eyed girl, and engaged her for another set.

But while Jesse was giving himself up to the enjoyment of the dance, Frank kept his wits about him and also kept his eyes and ears open.

He had noticed the angry glitter in the eyes of the young fellow, who had warned Jesse not to dance with his girl again.

Frank decided to watch the fellow, and it was well he did. The moment Jesse began dancing with the black-eyed girl again, the young man motioned to two of his friends, and the three left the cabin.

Frank James followed them. He saw the three men talking together in low tones, but he could not get near enough to overhear what they were saying.

In a few moments two of the men hurried to where their horses were tied, and, mounting, rode rapidly away.

When the jealous young cattleman returned to the cabin, there was a peculiar smile on his face.

Frank made his way to where Jesse was standing surrounded by a group of the prettiest girls in the room. In a whisper, he said to him:

"Keep your eyes open, there may be trouble ahead."

The young man who objected to his sweetheart dancing with the stranger was a sharp-eyed young fellow, and he had been watching the two strangers closely all the evening.

He had read a description of the road agents who had held up Colonel Campbell, and he was confident these two men filled the description given of the leaders.

The jealous young man had planned revenge on his supposed rival. He knew there was a big reward offered for the capture of the robbers, and the sheriff of the county would give half of it to any man who would furnish him with information as to the whereabouts of the robbers.

The young cattleman had sent a message to the sheriff that the leaders of the band were at the dance. He promised to point them out to the sheriff and his posse.

The two messengers rode rapidly, and by the time the dance was at its best the sheriff was on his way to the cabin with a posse of twenty men.

Jesse was again dancing with the pretty black-eyed girl.

They were leading the set. Suddenly the front door was thrown open, and the sheriff of the county strode

into the room. In each hand he held a revolver, while four stalwart men followed close at his heels.

A scene of the wildest confusion followed. The dance stopped at once, and many of the girls screamed at sight of the drawn revolvers.

Jesse James was standing in the center of the room, and faced the sheriff with a look of surprised inquiry on his face. Frank quietly made his way to the side of his brother.

The music had stopped as suddenly as the dance, and in a moment there was comparative silence in the room.

"Where are they? Here, Jack, point out the men! They shall not escape me this time; I have the house completely surrounded."

The young man, who had warned Jesse James not to dance with his girl, stepped forward with a gleam of triumph in his eyes, and pointed to the two outlaws.

"There they are! They are the leaders of the robbers!"

"In the name of the law I arrest you," said the sheriff, stepping forward. "Do not attempt any resistance, it will be worse than useless."

The two outlaws laughed as merrily as though the sheriff had just told a funny story.

"Will you surrender?"

"Never!" answered Frank, quietly.

The sheriff ordered the four men who had entered the room with him to close in on the outlaws.

"Stop!" cried Jesse, in a tone of command, and the four men at once came to a halt and drew their pistols.

"I have a proposition to submit to you; will you listen?"

"If it is a proposition to surrender," answered the sheriff.

"Allow the ladies to retire, and we will discuss the question with you."

"I have no time for discussion. Will you surrender?"

"Let the ladies leave the room."

"I shall take you by force if you do not surrender at once."

"If you are a gentleman, you will allow these ladies to leave the room before you continue the discussion."

This appeal to his chivalry had the desired effect on the sheriff.

He bowed low to the ladies present, and, after begging their pardon for such a rude interruption of the dance, politely requested them to leave the room for a few moments. Then he turned to the outlaw leader again and said:

"Now, hand over your pistols quietly. It will be suicide for you to attempt any resistance."

Jesse slowly drew his pistols from his belt, and extended them toward the sheriff with the muzzles turned toward himself.

The sheriff smiled at the ease with which he had captured the desperate robbers.

He put his own pistols back in his belt, and held out both hands for the weapons of the outlaw.

The movement was just what Jesse James had anticipated.

Quick as a flash, the outlaw reversed his pistols. There was a flash, a stunning report, and the sheriff lay dead at the feet of the outlaw.

"Give it to them, Frank! Shoot to kill!" cried Jesse,

and half-a-dozen pistol shots rang out in rapid succession. All four of the men who had entered the cabin with the sheriff were shot down.

The young man who had betrayed the outlaws made a dash for the door, but he was too late. Through the smoke Jesse saw him. There was another flash, and the man who had played the traitor fell dead across the door.

"Make a run for it now, Frank!" Jesse cried, as he dashed out at the door, followed closely by his brother. They left six bodies behind them, and the floor of the ballroom had been made a pool of blood.

The posse outside fired wildly at the two men who had dashed out at the door.

The outlaws turned and fired right and left into the panic-stricken crowd of deputies, and three of them went down.

The others ran for cover, and the outlaws reached their horses, and were soon riding rapidly away, having escaped without a scratch.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RAID ON THE DAREVILLE BANK.

A few days later a party of horsemen rode into the little town of Dareville, Tennessee.

They were none other than Jesse and Frank James, Dick Liddell, Billy Haynes and two others of the gang who had come over from Missouri on hearing of the outlaws' escapades.

These men would easily have passed for a party of cattlemen anywhere in that part of the country and their appearance on the streets of Dareville attracted no special attention.

The little band of men rode down the main street of the place. But the population of Dareville did not dream at that time that such distinguished visitors were in their midst. If they had, the reception of the visitors might have been different.

As the outlaws rode slowly along, they carefully noted the surroundings. As they approached the principal street crossing of the place, a large sign, hung above the door of a somewhat pretentious cabin, attracted their attention.

The sign, which was rudely painted on canvas in large irregular letters, read:

BANK.

Deposits Received Here, Subject to Check.

Coin and Bills Exchanged for Gold Dust.

"That's the one!" said Jesse, pulling up his horse. "I doubt if you find much in it when you break it," said Frank, with a smile, as he looked over the little cabin that was designated as a bank.

The outlaws drew rein in front of the bank, and Jesse, Frank and Dick Liddell dismounted, and entered the building.

The citizens lounging about the streets saw the party of strangers stop in front of the bank, and three of them enter, but nothing strange was thought of it at the moment.

They were supposed to be a party of cattlemen from the hills who had come to deposit their earnings. Similar parties came to town every day.

But that day the good people of Dareville found a surprise in store for them, and it was one they did not soon forget.

Inside the little building, the three outlaws found the limited space railed off in the same manner it is in larger institutions of the same kind.

There was a window for the cashier, another for the receiving teller, and the president occupied a revolving chair on a little platform, from which he could see every one who entered the bank, and all that took place inside the railing.

Back of the cashier's desk there was a large safe, which was open when the three men entered.

Dick Liddell was to engage the attention of the president of the bank, while Jesse and Frank transacted their business with the cashier.

Walking straight up to the window, behind which the cashier stood, Jesse glanced at the open safe, and then asked in a quiet tone:

"How much money have you got in there?"

"We have a few thousands, enough to pay all depositors in full. How much is your balance?" asked the cashier, thinking his visitor was a depositor, whose face he had forgotten.

"I'll take all the coin you've got, and hand it over quick."

The cashier simply stared at Jesse for a moment as though he had not understood him.

"Curse you, did you hear what I said? Hand out the money in that safe, and you want to be blamed quick about it, too."

The outlaw shoved a pistol through the little window, and covered the cashier as he spoke.

"Write out a check, if you have any money here," said the cashier, who still did not understand that he was face to face with a desperate robber.

"Here is my check," said Jesse, showing the muzzle of his revolver in the face of the cashier, "and, if it is not honored infernally quick, it will go off and then this bank will have a dead cashier among its assets. Is the check good?"

By this time the cashier began to comprehend the situation. The president, too, saw that something was wrong, and he started to get up to see what it was.

As he rose from his chair, he looked into the muzzle of a pistol in the hands of Dick Liddell.

"Stay right there, old buck!" said Liddell. "My friend there can draw his money without you."

The president sat down.

"See here, my friend," said the cashier to Jesse, "this is rather a dangerous and unpleasant kind of joke. Don't you think it has gone about far enough?"

"Oh, you think I am joking, do you? Well, if you don't hand over that money in a pair of seconds it will be a fatal joke for you."

Then the cashier realized for the first time that he was dealing with a bold and desperate robber. He was not excited or alarmed. He had seen enough of life in the West not to be surprised at anything, and he was a man who did not know what fear was. It was the first time an attempt had ever been made to rob the bank, but the cashier kept under his desk a loaded revolver for just such emergencies as this.

With his eyes fixed on the face of the robber, he

quietly dropped his hand under the desk and drew forth the pistol.

Quick and cautious as he was, Jesse saw the movement almost as soon as his hand touched the revolver.

There was a shot from the outlaw's revolver, and, with a faint groan, the brave cashier sank to the floor dead.

"Quick now, boys, the money is ours. Shoot down every man that moves a hand," cried Jesse, as he broke down the wire door and ran around to the safe back of the cashier's desk.

With the butt of his revolver he broke the wooden drawers in the safe that contained the money. Taking a leather bag from his pocket, he emptied the contents of the drawers into it. There was more than fifty thousand dollars in the bank, and the outlaw took every cent of it.

The job was quickly done. In less than two minutes Jesse had transferred the contents of the money drawers to his leather bag, and, with the latter fastened about his neck, he rejoined Frank and Dick Liddell, who had been standing guard over the president and the receiving teller.

"All right, boys, my check has been cashed, we'll go now," said Jesse.

The three outlaws ran out to where the other members of the gang stood with the horses.

They were not a moment too soon. Attracted by the pistol shot in the bank, men were hurrying there from all parts of the town. They suspected an attempt at robbery as soon as they heard the shot, and, as most of them had money on deposit in the bank, they were ready to fight for it at a moment's notice.

"I've got the stuff, boys, we'll move on, now," said Jesse, leaping on his horse.

The outlaws turned to ride away, but by this time the result of their visit was known to a part of the crowd of excited citizens.

Before they had ridden twenty yards a volley of shots was fired at them. The horses of two members of the gang were hit, and a bullet whistled close to the head of Jesse.

"Curse 'em, if that's their game, I'll take a hand myself," cried the outlaw leader, and, wheeling his horse around, he drew his revolvers and opened fire.

The other members of the band followed his lead, and, with revolvers in both hands, they fired a regular fusillade of shots into the crowd gathered about the bank.

Three men dropped and then there was a hurried scattering and a rush for cover.

For ten minutes the outlaws rode up and down the principal street of the town, firing right and left and yelling like demons.

If a band of Sioux Indians, led by Sitting Bull, had suddenly dashed into the town they could not have created a greater panic.

When the outlaws finally ceased firing there was not a citizen of Dareville visible on the streets. They had all sought refuge where they would be safe from the flying bullets.

Satisfied that they had thoroughly intimidated the inhabitants of the place, the outlaws finally rode out of town as slowly as they had entered it, and not a man in the place once thought of pursuit.

TO BE CONTINUED.

YOUR OPINIONS OF FAMOUS MEN.

Grand Prize Contest



22 VALUABLE PRIZES
GIVEN AWAY.

Here is a chance for every reader of JESSE JAMES WEEKLY.

Boys, you have all heard of the plucky little Kansan who has been making himself famous on the other side of the world.

What do you think of him?

What characteristics do you see in his face?

What has he done, anyway?

What do you think is the best thing he ever did?

The boys who can best answer such questions applying to any famous American, known for his brave deeds, will win handsome prizes.

Here is the plan of one of the most novel contests ever placed before the American boys.

Look up what interesting facts you can find about any famous American. Then write them out in your own words, stating your own opinion of him, his appearance, and the particular achievement which pleases you the most. The first prize will be awarded to the person sending in the most interesting and best written article; the next best will win the second prize, and so on. It makes no difference how short they are, but no contribution must be longer than 500 words.

LOOK AT THE PRIZES.

TWO FIRST PRIZES

The two who send us the most interesting and best written articles will each receive a first-class Camera, complete with achromatic lens, and loaded with six exposures each. Absolutely ready for use. For square pictures $3\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; capacity six exposures without reloading; size of camera $4\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ inches; weight 15 ounces; well made, covered with grain leather and handsomely finished.

FIVE SECOND PRIZES

The five who send us the next best articles will each receive a "Sterling" Magic Lantern Outfit, together with 72 admission tickets and a large show bill. Each lantern is 10 inches high, 4 inches in diameter, with a $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch plano-complex condensing lens and a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch double complex objective lens. Uses kerosene oil only.

FIVE THIRD PRIZES

The five who send us the next best articles will each receive a Handsome Pearl Handled Knife. These knives have each four blades of the best English steel, hardened and tempered. The handle is pearl, the lining brass, and the bolsters German silver.

For ten next best descriptions, ten sets of the latest and most entertaining Puzzles and Novelties on the market, numbering three puzzles each, including Uncle Isaac's Pawnshop Puzzle; the Magic Marble Puzzle and the Demon Outfit.

This Contest closes December 1. All contributions must be in by that date.

SEND IN YOUR ARTICLES AT ONCE, BOYS.

We are going to publish all of the best ones during the progress of the Contest.

We will have to reserve to ourselves the right of judging which article has the most merit, but our readers know that they may depend upon Street & Smith, and on their absolute fairness and justice in conducting Contests. This one will be no exception to the rule.

REMEMBER!

Whether your contribution wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published, together with the name of the writer.

To become a contestant for the prize you must cut out the **Character Contest Coupon**, printed in this issue. Fill it out properly, and send it to JESSE JAMES WEEKLY, care of Street & Smith, 238 William Street, New York City, together with your article. No contribution will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

COUPON.

"JESSE JAMES WEEKLY" CHARACTER CONTEST No. 1.

Date.....1901

Name.....

City or Town.....

State.....

ABOUT FAMOUS MEN.

During the progress of the Prize Character Contest this department will be devoted to the publication of the best articles sent in by the contestants.

Here are some of the best ones received so far. They are coming in with a rush, boys, so hurry up and send in your articles as soon as possible.

Sheridan's Famous Victories.

(By Gus Burke, Trenton, N. J.)

I suppose several of the contestants will write articles about General Sheridan, but as I am sending in mine early in the contest, perhaps mine will be printed first.

I think Sheridan was the finest of all the generals in the Civil War.

Every one knows of his famous ride from Winchester "twenty miles away" to the scene of battle at Cedar Creek, where he turned back his retreating army and won a victory in the face of defeat.

I love to read that poem, though I have often read it before, but I think it ought to have a footnote after it, telling what Lincoln said when he heard the news. He at once made him a major-general in the regular army "for the personal gallantry, military skill and just confidence in the courage and gallantry of our troops displayed by you on the 19th day of October at Cedar Run, whereby, under the blessing of Providence, your routed army was reorganized, a great national disaster averted and a brilliant victory achieved over the rebels for the third time in pitched battle within thirty days."

General Grant wrote, "Turning what bid fair to be a disaster into a glorious victory stamps Sheridan what I always thought him, one of the ablest of generals."

That was perfectly true, because in the spring of that year, 1864, when Sheridan was placed by Grant in command of the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac, numbering nearly 12,000 men, he said, "I feel every confidence that you will do the best, and will leave you as far as possible to act on your own judgment and not embarrass you with orders and instructions."

From May to August Sheridan lost over 5,000 men in killed and wounded, in smaller battles as he protected Grant's flank while he moved his forces to the James River, or in cutting off Lee's supplies. Meantime General Early had been spreading terror by his attempt to take Washington, thus hoping also to withdraw Grant's attention from Lee at Richmond.

The time had come for decisive action.

The battle of Opequan was fought September 19, 1864, Early being completely routed and losing about 4,000 men, five pieces of artillery, and nine army flags, with an equal loss of men by the Federals. The fight was a bitter one from morning till evening, a regiment like the One Hundred and Fourteenth New York going into the battle with 180 men, and coming out with forty, their dead piled one above another! Sheridan at first stood a little to the rear, so that he might calmly direct the battle; but at last, swinging his sword, and exclaiming, "I can't stand this!" he rode into the conflict. The next day he telegraphed to Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, "We have just sent them whirling through Winchester, and we are after them to-morrow. This army behaved splendidly."

This battle quickened the hope and courage of the North, who began to see the end of the war. "Whirling through Winchester" was reported all over the land. Abraham Lincoln telegraphed, "Have just heard of your great victory. God bless you all, officers and men! Strongly inclined to come up and see you." Grant ordered each of his two Richmond armies to fire a salute of one hundred guns.

The next day Sheridan passed on after Early and gave battle at Fisher's Hill, the Confederates losing sixteen guns and 1,100 prisoners, besides killed and wounded. Grant's orders were now to lay waste the valley, so that Lee might have no base of supplies. Over 2,000 barns filled with grain, over seventy mills, besides bridges and railroads were burned, and 7,000 cattle and sheep appropriated by the Union army. Such destruction seemed pitiful, but if the war was thereby shortened, as it doubtless was, then the saving of bloodshed was a blessing.

October 15 Sheridan was summoned to Washington for consultation. Early, learning his absence, and having been reinforced by 12,000 troops, decided at once to give battle at Cedar Creek. His army marched at midnight, canteens being left in camp lest they make a noise. At daybreak, October 19, with the well-known

"rebel yell" the enemy rushed upon the sleeping camps of the Union army. Nearly a thousand of our men were taken prisoners, and eighteen guns. A panic ensued, and in utter confusion, though there was some brave fighting, our troops fell back to the rear. Sheridan, on his way from Washington, had slept at Winchester that night, twenty miles away. At nine o'clock he rode out of the town on his splendid black horse, unconscious of danger to his army. Soon the sound of battle was heard, and not a mile away he met the fugitives. He at once ordered some troops to stop the stragglers, and rushed on to the front as swiftly as his foaming steed could carry him, swinging his hat, and shouting, "Face the other way, boys! face the other way! If I had been here, boys, this never should have happened." Meeting a colonel who said, "The army is whipped," he replied, "You are, but the army isn't!"

Rude breastworks of stones, rocks and trees were thrown up. Then came desperate fighting, and then the triumphant charge. The first line was carried, and then the second, Sheridan leading a brigade in person. Early's army was thoroughly routed. The captured guns were all retaken, besides twenty-four pieces of artillery and 1,600 prisoners. Early reported 1,800 killed and wounded.

An American Martyr.

(By Charles McIntyre, Buffalo, N. Y.)

David Porter, one of the heroes of the War of 1812, is not often heard of, but I have always felt like standing up for him on account of the shameful way he was treated after all he had done for his country. He was unreasonably sentenced to a suspension of service for six months for an imaginary violation of orders. I think this was one of the disgraceful acts of tyrannical injustice which our officers, both of the navy and of the land army, have been obliged to suffer from ignorant puppets filling public offices which have relation to their respective services. Porter resigned, and left the country. He took command of the Mexican navy.

In 1829 he was offered the restoration of his position by Jackson, but he refused. He accepted, however, the post of consul-general at Algiers. He was still there when the French took the country, and was appointed charge d'affairs at Constantinople. He died in a suburb of that city, March 28, 1843, an exile from his country, and a victim of injustice. Posterity has learned to appreciate his merits, and his name shall be dear to his countrymen long after those who attempted to disgrace him are forgotten.

Porter first distinguished himself at Malta, when in command of the *Enterprise*, in 1803, and the way he acted there I like best of all his exploits.

The Englishmen were all the time interfering with us, trying to find out if we had English sailors on our ships.

While he was at Malta an English sailor came alongside the American frigate and began to abuse the officers and the crew. Upon Porter's orders the Englishman was immediately seized and soundly flogged. The governor of Malta was indignant at this, and intended to detain the *Enterprise* and judge her officers. But Porter ordered

all his men at their posts, and the gunners to take lighted matches, and sailed out of the harbor unmolested.

A few days after this incident he came out victorious from an engagement with twelve Spanish gunboats, who had attacked him in the Gibraltar.

In 1813, while cruising in Southern waters, he left Valparaiso, Chili, on his celebrated cruise in the Pacific waters.

Porter was in the Pacific about seven months, and during this short time twelve British cruisers fell into his hands. Two of them were sent to the United States laden with oil, four were sold at Valparaiso, "two were dismissed with prisoners on parole," the other four were converted into vessels of war.

At the end of September the *Essex* and her consorts reached the Washington Islands, belonging to the Marquesas group.

After the *Essex* had been refitted, Porter directed his course toward Valparaiso. He had ascertained that three British frigates were in search of him to capture the *Essex*, or drive her from the Pacific.

He reached and anchored in the bay of Valparaiso, the 3d of February, 1814. He had not long been here when two sails were sighted. One was the British frigate, *Phæbe*, and the other her consort, the *Cherub*. Porter prepared for action, although resolved not to begin the fight in a neutral port.

The two British frigates advanced, but, seeing that Porter was a formidable enemy, although they were better armed, and were superior in numbers they did not begin an attack.

At length, trusting in the sailing qualities of his vessel, Porter put to sea, accompanied by the *Essex Junior*. Unhappily, as the *Essex* was leaving the harbor a squall struck her, which carried away much of her canvas and rigging. She now took refuge into the harbor again, chased by the *Phæbe* and the *Cherub*. It was now evident that, seeing the disadvantage of the American ship, the two Britishers intended to attack her in neutral waters.

The action was commenced, and the guns of the *Essex* were so skillfully managed that in half an hour the two English ships hauled off for repairs. They soon returned, however, but carried on the battle with long range guns. Porter now endeavored to close with his antagonists, but having lost most of his canvas in the squall the British ships easily eluded him. They poured in a terrible fire, but the Americans responded as terribly. At this moment the brave commander of the *Essex Junior*, Lieutenant Downes, made his way in a boat to Porter to receive his orders. But nothing could be done, the *Junior* being inferior to either the Britishers. At last, after an action of four hours and a half, one-half the crew being killed and the *Essex* being terribly injured, Porter surrendered.

He was kindly treated by his captors, and was sent home on parole in the *Essex Junior*. Off New York she was boarded by a British frigate, who disputed the passport of the captain of the *Phæbe*. Seeing this detention, Porter declared he was no longer a prisoner on parole, and escaped in a sailboat. He was triumphantly received at New York.

And then after all this service he was tried and suspended from the navy.

Decatur's Personal Bravery.

(By Thomas Cook, Alleghany, Pa.)

I have noticed your character contest and would like to submit the following article for the contest:

Stephen Decatur was one of the bravest and most admired naval officers who ever served in the American navy.

The event that first made him famous occurred at Tripoli, in 1803, during our war with that country.

It was the burning of the *Philadelphia*. A few months before Captain Bainbridge had been wrecked near the coast, and after a brave resistance, captured by the Moors.

His ship, the *Philadelphia*, also had been captured, and was now in the enemy's hands. The American commander, Commodore Preble, had long cherished the desire of burning the *Philadelphia* under the very guns of the forts which protected the harbor. He had despaired of seeing his plan put to practice, when one day a small schooner was captured. Decatur had also thought of burning the *Philadelphia*. When he saw the captured schooner he resolved to make the attempt in it. The vessel was named the *Intrepid*; and receiving direct orders from Preble, Decatur sailed in her from Syracuse, in Sicily, with a crew of seventy-five men. She was loaded with inflammable matter. On the night of the 16th of December, 1803, the schooner was at the mouth of the harbor of Tripoli. The brig *Siren*, commanded by Charles Stewart, was in the distance to render aid in case of need.

Slowly the *Intrepid* entered the harbor. She was bound on a dangerous enterprise. All around her were loaded cannon ready to blaze at the first signal. The *Philadelphia*, the object of the gallant Decatur's ambition, carried forty guns ready to open fire upon his presumptive crew. The *Intrepid* approached the *Philadelphia*. The pilot requested the permission to tie a rope to the frigate, saying that the schooner had lost her anchors. The rope was soon in its place and the *Intrepid* rode by the frigate.

Decatur gave the signal, and in an instant the Americans had boarded the *Philadelphia*. The confused crew were easily overpowered, and the vessel was fired. The Americans left the frigate as rapidly as they had boarded it, and sailed out of the harbor followed by numerous shots from the forts. As they went out of the harbor they rent the air with three loud cheers, which were accompanied by the explosion of the *Philadelphia's* magazine. Decatur was awarded by Congress with a sword.

Peace was signed at the close of 1805. Decatur returned home. He was received with enthusiasm, and his landing was saluted with a general public tribute.

After the burning of the *Philadelphia* he had been made captain; now he was promoted to the rank of commodore. He was twenty-eight years of age at the time.

Decatur also distinguished himself in the war of 1812.

I know that he fell in a duel with Commodore Barron over certain imaginary insults.

The manner of this great hero's fall may somewhat darken his memory; but his gallant services shall always live in the hearts of his countrymen, and his name shall stand one of the foremost on the list of America's celebrated sons.

"The Father of the American Navy."

(By Charles Richardson, Chester, Pa.)

I know a good deal about John Barry, surnamed "The father of the American navy," on account of one of my ancestors having served under him on the U. S. frigate *Raleigh*.

He was a fine fighter and a perfect gentleman. On board his vessel everything was kept in perfect order and this showed that he was a most rigid disciplinarian. His men were all greatly attached to him, and no man was ever known to desert one of his vessels.

There are several things about him which I like very much, and I can hardly tell which I like best. About the best thing, I guess, is the answer he gave General Howe, the British general, when Howe tried to get him to betray his country.

In October, 1776, he received proposals from the British general, to betray the American service and receive as a reward the command of the English fleet. Barry scornfully rejected these overtures, and the following reply from him to Howe has been recorded: "I have devoted myself to the cause of my country, and not the value and command of the whole British fleet can seduce me from it."

It just thrills me every time I read those words.

Another brave thing he did occurred in 1778, when he achieved a brilliant victory at the mouth of the Delaware River. It was during the month of March. One night he manned four large rowboats, and favored by the tide and by the darkness of night, he rowed past the hostile vessels stationed in the river, arriving safely at Port Penn.

Here was lying a British schooner and two transports. The schooner's crew was thirty-three men, and she carried twenty guns. Barry had with him but twenty-eight men. The schooner was boarded and captured. The two other ships surrendered also. Two British cruisers descended the river in pursuit of the brave and gallant Barry. He was obliged to burn his prizes, but, anyway, the British did not get them.

In 1871 Barry received the *Alliance*, one of the vessels which had accompanied Paul Jones in his celebrated cruise around the British islands, and sailed in her on a mission to France. On his return he captured several English privateers.

On the 28th of May the *Alliance* encountered two British frigates, the *Atlanta* and the *Trepassy*. At the beginning of the engagement the wind abated and a dead calm followed, the *Alliance* being unable to bring her broadsides to bear. After two hours' fighting Barry was removed to the cabin, wounded in the shoulder. The flag of the *Alliance* was shot down, and victory seemed to favor the British. The brave Barry ordered himself to be carried on deck, and his presence animated the sailors. The fight was renewed with fresh vigor. The flag was replaced, and a light breeze starting up, the *Alliance* poured broadside after broadside on her antagonists.

At the end of the third hour Barry had received the swords of the British captains, and he counted two more prizes on the list of his captures.

He will always be remembered as one of those who contributed in the establishment of the American navy. He had the honor of making the first capture of any vessel of war by a regular American cruiser.

HUNTING AND TRAPPING DEPARTMENT.

This department is brimful of information and ideas of interest to the young trapper and hunter. Write us if you have any questions to ask concerning these subjects, and they will be answered in a special column. Address all communications to the "Hunting and Trapping Department."

HINTS FOR SETTING TRAPS.

From time immemorial, and in every nation of the world, the art of trapping has been more or less practiced. By some as a means of supplying their wants in the shape of daily food, and by others for the purpose of merchandise or profit.

To be a clever and successful trapper, much more is required than is generally supposed. The mere fact of a person's being able to set a trap cleverly and judiciously forms but a small part of his proficiency, and unless he enters deeper into the subject and learns something of the nature and habits of the animals he intends to catch, his traps will be set in vain, or at best meet with but indifferent success.

The study of natural history here becomes a matter of necessity as well as pleasure and profit. And unless the trapper thoroughly acquaints himself with the habits of his various game, the sagacity and cunning of his intended victim will often outwit his most shrewd endeavors, much to his chagrin.

The sense of smell, so largely developed in many animals, becomes one of the trapper's most serious obstacles, and seems at times to amount almost to positive reason, so perfectly do the creatures baffle the most ingenious attempts of man in his efforts to capture them. A little insight into the ways of these artful animals, however, and a little experience with their odd tricks soon enables one to cope with them successfully and overcome their whims.

In the art of trapping the bait is often entirely dispensed with, the traps being set and carefully concealed in the runways of the various animals. These by-paths are easily detected by an experienced trapper, and are indicated either by footprints or other evidences of the animal, together with matted leaves and broken twigs and grasses.

Natural channels, such as hollow logs or crevices between rocks or fallen trees, offer excellent situations for steel traps, and a good trapper is always on the *qui vive*

for such chance advantages, thus often saving much of the time and labor which would otherwise be spent in the building of artificial enclosures, etc.

The most effective baits used in the art of trapping are those which are used to attract the animal through its sense of smell, as distinct from that of its mere appetite for food. These baits are known in the profession as "medicine," or scent baits, and possess the most remarkable power of attracting the various animals from great distances, and leading them almost irresistibly to any desired spot. Such is the barkstone or castoreum, of such value in the capture of the beaver, and the oil of anise, so commonly used for the trapping of animals in general.

In all cases avoid handling the trap with the bare hand. Many an amateur has set and reset his traps in vain, and retired from the field of trapping in disgust, from the mere want of observing this rule. Animals of keen scent are quick in detecting the slightest odors, and that left by the touch of a human hand often suffices to drive the creature away from a trap which, under other circumstances, would have been its certain destruction. To be sure, the various scent baits already alluded to, will in a measure overcome human traces, but not always effectually, and in order to insure success no precautions so simple should be neglected. A pair of clean buckskin gloves are valuable requisites to the trapper, and should always be "on hand" when setting or transporting traps.

THE GUN TRAP.

The gun trap is very simply constructed, and may be put in working order in a very few moments. The weapon may be a rifle or shotgun. In the latter case, it should be heavily loaded with buckshot. The stock should be first firmly tied to some tree, or secured in a stout crotch driven into the ground, the barrel being similarly supported.

The gun should be about three feet from the ground,

and should be aimed at some near tree to avoid possible accident to a chance passerby within its range. The gun should then be cocked, but not capped, due caution being always used, and the cap adjusted the very last thing after the trap is baited and set. Where a rifle is used, the cartridge should not be inserted until the last thing.

It is next necessary to cut a small sapling about a foot or two in length. Its diameter should allow it to fit snugly inside the guard in front of the trigger, without springing the hammer. Its other end should now be supported by a very slight crotch, off to one side of the gun. Another sapling should next be procured, its length being sufficient to reach from the muzzle of the gun to the end of the first stick, and having a branch stub or hook on one end. The other extremity should be attached by a string to the tip of the first stick.

Now take a piece of meat and draw it firmly over the hook in the long stick. Prop the latter in such a position that the bait shall hang directly in front of the muzzle. The crotch supporting the stick should be firmly implanted in the ground in order to hold the bait from being drawn to either side of the muzzle.

The gun trap is now set, and its merits may be tested. Before adjusting the cap the pieces should be tried several times to insure their perfect working. A slight pull on the bait from the front will draw the short stick forward. This immediately acts on the trigger and causes the hammer to snap. By a few trials, the sticks can be arranged so as to spring the trigger easily, and where a hair trigger is used a mere touch on the bait will suffice to discharge the gun. When all is found to work perfectly, the trap should be surrounded by a rude pen of sticks and branches, extending two or three feet beyond the muzzle, in order to insure an approach directly in the aim of the gun. The cap should now be placed on the nipple, after which the deadly device may be left to do its certain work. Where the locality is like to be frequented by other hunters or trappers, it is well to put up a "danger" signal to guard against accident. If desired, two or three guns may be arranged like the spokes of a wheel, all aiming near the bait. Even with one gun the victim stands but little chance, but where two or three pour their contents into his body, his death is an absolute certainty.

By fastening the gun three feet above ground, the load is discharged upward into the mouth of its victim, and thus directly through the brain. Where two or more guns are used, it is advisable to aim at least one in such a direction as will send its charge into the breast of the animal.

There are several other methods of setting the gun trap. One way consists in attaching a string to the

finger piece of the trigger, passing it back through a small staple or screw eye inserted in the under side of the stock for that purpose, and then drawing the string forward and attaching it to the top of the bait stick. This latter is stuck in the ground directly in front of the muzzle and the bait secured to its extremity. When the tempting morsel is grasped, the bait stick is drawn forward and the string pulled, the result, of course, being the discharge of the gun. By still another method an elastic is passed through the screw eye in the stock and over the finger piece of the trigger, thus tending continually to draw it back and spring the hammer. To set the gun a short stick is inserted behind the finger piece, thus overcoming the power of the elastic. It should be very delicately adjusted, so that a mere touch will dislodge it. Its length should be about six inches, and to its other end the bait stick should be attached and arranged as first described. Although a rather dangerous trap to be set at random it is nevertheless often utilized, and has brought many a dreaded marauder to his doom.

THE BRICK TRAP.

Take four bricks and arrange them on the ground, letting them rest on their narrow sides. If properly arranged they should have a space between them nearly as large as the broad surface of a brick.

A small, forked twig, resembling a miniature fork for a sling shot, should then be procured. Whittle the end on each side so that it will present a flat surface.

Next cut a slender stick, about four inches in length, bluntly pointed at each end. A small plug with a flat top should now be driven into the ground, inside the trap, about three inches from either of the end bricks, and projecting about two inches from the ground.

The trap is now ready to be set. Lay the flat end of the forked twig over the top of the plug, with the forks pointing forward, or toward the end of the enclosure nearest the plug. The pointed stick should then be adjusted, placing one end on the flat end of the fork, over the plug, and the other beneath the fifth brick, which should be rested upon it.

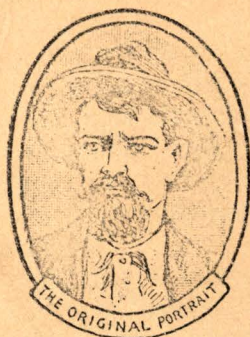
The bait, consisting of berries, bird seed or other similar substances, should then be scattered on the ground on the inside of the enclosure.

When the bird flies to the trap he will generally alight on the forked twig, which by his weight tilts to one side and dislodges the pieces, thus letting fall the sustained brick.

It is not intended to kill the bird, and when rightly constructed will capture it alive. Care is necessary in setting the topmost brick in such a position that it will fall aright, and completely cover the open space.

This is a very simple and effectual little contrivance and can be made with a box instead of bricks, if desired. A piece of board may also be substituted for the top brick, and the enclosure beneath made larger by spreading the bricks further apart, thus making a more roomy dungeon for the captive bird.

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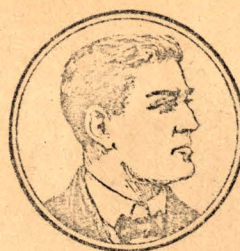


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